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ABSTRACT

This guide is intended to increase access for individuals with disabilities to local, state (New York), and national testing programs, as well as facilitate the consistent provision of modifications necessary to allow these individuals to demonstrate their knowledge and abilities. Ten modules cover the following topics: (1) federal and state requirements pertaining to test access and modification; (2) tests and examinations administered to students with disabilities; (3) high school equivalency diplomas and general educational development tests; (4) advanced placement programs; (5) preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test, SAT I--reasoning test and SAT II--subject tests; (6) American College Testing assessment program; (7) Graduate Record Examinations; (8) Miller Analogies Test; (9) professional licensing examinations; and (10) New York State civil service examinations. Chapters typically describe the measure/s, review eligibility requirements for test modification, describe specific appropriate modifications, and give a source for practice materials. Nine appendices include directories of New York State Education Department offices, further information on the New York competency test program, further information on national tests, and a glossary of abbreviations and terms. (DB)

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TEST ACCESS & MODIFICATION

for Individuals with Disabilities

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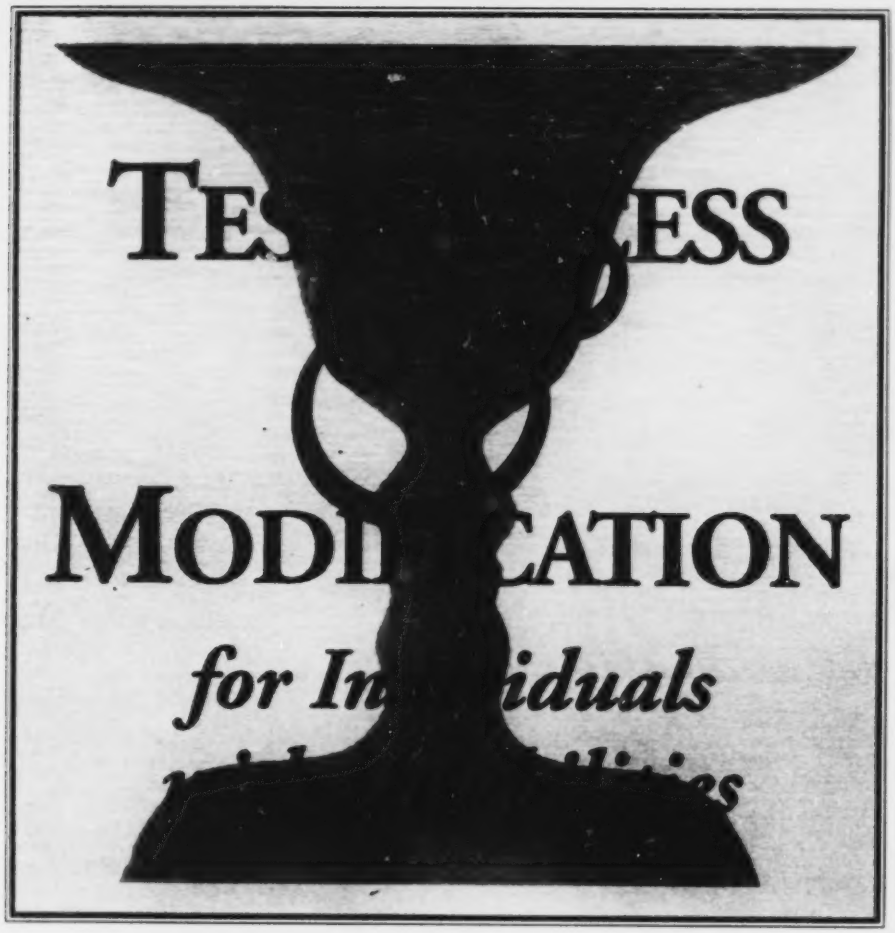

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THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT/THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK/ALBANY, N.Y.12234

DEPUTY COMMISSIONER FOR VOCATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL SERVICES FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

December 1995

TO: District Superintendents
Superintendents of Schools
Superintendents of State-Operated and State-Supported Schools
Organizations, Parents and Individuals Concerned with Special Education
Nonpublic School Administrators and Educators
Principals of Public Schools
Directors of Special Education
Chairpersons of Committees on Special Education
Directors of Pupil Personnel Services
Guidance Counselors
Colleges with Special Education and Rehabilitation Preservice Programs
Commissioner's Advisory Panel on Special Education Services
Impartial Hearing Officers
Community Dispute Resolution Centers
SETRC Project Directors and Training Specialists
Transition Coordination Sites
VESID District Office Managers

FROM: Lawrence C. Gloeckler

SUBJECT: Test Access and Modification for Individuals with Disabilities

During the 1990s, education reforms were enacted at the State level (A New Compact for Learning and the Least Restrictive Environment Implementation Policy Paper) and federal level (Goals 2000: Educate America Act) to improve educational results for all students, including those with disabilities; and emphasis was placed on the appropriate integration of students with disabilities in all general education programs, including test programs. All students, including those with disabilities, are expected to learn and achieve high standards. By the close of the 1993-94 school year, 7,319 students with disabilities graduated with a Regents or local high school diploma. Of these students, 4,536 were provided test modifications.

The issue of test access and modification has grown because our expectations for students with disabilities have grown. These expectations transcend the public school secondary education program. Upon becoming adults, some students with disabilities will need entry level employment opportunities and their public school program should be designed so that they may obtain and succeed in such opportunities. However, many students with disabilities consider, and should be encouraged to pursue, higher education opportunities and highly competitive careers. Admissions requirements established by colleges and universities, authorized accommodations for Scholastic Assessment Tests (SATs) and American College Tests (ACTs), tests required for licensure as a professional, State civil service examinations, and for other tests/examinations are important to consider in making career plans.

This publication addresses test access and modification much more comprehensively than previous publications of the New York State Education Department. It is designed as an important tool to be used by schools, parents and students to make informed decisions in designing special education programs and making long-range plans. It has been developed for students with disabilities to promote their access to challenging course work, to local, State and national examination programs, and to higher education and employment opportunities which are commensurate with their abilities.

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PREFACE

The mission of the New York State Education Department Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) includes an expanded role in developing and coordinating appropriate services so that people with disabilities can lead self-sufficient, self-directed lives to the maximum extent possible. Consistent with this mission, VESID provides vocational rehabilitation services and coordinates lifelong educational services for individuals with disabilities to assist in expanding and enhancing their opportunities to live and work independently in their communities. Office planning and initiatives are directed toward the establishment of mechanisms to ensure that individuals with disabilities will continue to have their needs appropriately met, throughout their lives if necessary, as they grow from infants and toddlers to preschoolers; as they progress through elementary and secondary education programs; and as they pursue higher education and employment opportunities.

In January 1995, the administration of the Education Department's Office for Special Education Services (OSES) was consolidated into VESID. This consolidation will help ensure the continuity of services and encourage long-term planning and goal setting so individuals with disabilities will have an equitable opportunity to access and succeed in high quality educational programs and be fully employed.

This publication is an example of how New Yorkers with disabilities will be better served by this consolidation and a lifelong view to educational opportunity. Test access and modification is not an issue only in elementary and secondary school; it is also an important consideration in identifying and pursuing postsecondary education and employment opportunities. The information presented in the following pages is intended to increase access to local, State and national test programs, as well as the consistent provision of test modifications which are necessary in order to demonstrate knowledge and abilities. Moreover, this publication will promote and facilitate short and long-range planning for individuals with disabilities by focusing on a particular segment of their life, kindergarten through grade 12, within the framework of life opportunities.

FOREWORD

This publication provides State Education Department policies and information regarding test access and modification which will assist school staff, parents, students, and others involved in designing educational programs and setting academic and career goals for students with disabilities. This manual addresses testing only as it relates to ensuring appropriate access and accommodations. It is not intended as a primary source of information on testing programs and testing issues in general. Each module indicates sources for obtaining additional information regarding the tests or program discussed.

This publication does not include an exhaustive listing or discussion of all local, State and national tests and test programs. However, the various tests and programs which are addressed will provide a basis for identifying trends and similarities across tests and programs, as well as policies and procedures which may differ. Individuals with disabilities who require test modifications are strongly encouraged to contact appropriate testing authorities well in advance of test administration in order to receive information regarding policies and procedures for requesting test modifications, as well as the extent to which such modifications are available.

The information contained in this publication is accurate as of the date of publication. The policies presented in Module 2 (TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS ADMINISTERED TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 12) and Module 3 (HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DIPLOMAS AND GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TESTS) of this document supersede all Education Department policies previously published in regard to test access and modification for students with disabilities.

This publication has been developed in a modular format in order to facilitate the insertion of personal notes or applicable local policies and procedures.

TEST ACCESS AND MODIFICATION AND SCHOOL REFORM

Three education reform initiatives have recently been enacted which specify important goals and principles applicable to all students, and strongly support the appropriate provision of test access and modification for students with disabilities. The three initiatives are:

- Goals 2000: Educate America Act
- A New Compact for Learning
- Least Restrictive Environment Implementation Policy Paper

On March 31, 1994, President Clinton signed into law the Goals 2000: Educate America Act. Its purpose is to improve learning and teaching by providing a national framework for education reform by promoting research, consensus building and systemic changes in order to ensure equitable educational opportunities and high levels of educational achievement for all students.

Three years earlier, the New York State Board of Regents adopted A New Compact for Learning, a comprehensive strategy for improving public elementary, middle and secondary education results. The Compact is based on the principle that all children can learn and calls for collaboration by parents, educators, State and local governments, colleges, libraries, museums, social services agencies, community groups and other stakeholders in the efficacy of the State's educational system.

The innovative and far reaching provisions of these national and State educational reforms are completely consistent with one another, each acting as a catalyst to advance and support the other. Both are focused on educational results and call for the establishment of high educational standards to be applicable to all students regardless of race, gender, marital status, color, religion, national origin or disability. Understanding that all children are not the same, however, the expectation that all children will excel is coupled with the recognition that individual talents and abilities, interests and emotions, strengths and needs must be addressed in order to provide each student an equitable opportunity to learn.

Both the Compact and Goals 2000 focus on:

- Academic Mastery - Students will excel in mathematics and science achievement. They will also be proficient in knowledge and skills which will prepare them for college, employment, family life responsibilities and citizenship.

- School Completion - At least 90 percent of students will successfully complete the assessments and course work which are required in order to graduate with a high school diploma.

- Student Results - Every student will have access to the resources which are necessary to be successful in the school program. The requirement is not equality of input, but equity of results.

Advancing the principles of the Compact and Goals 2000, the Board of Regents adopted the Least Restrictive Environment Implementation Policy Paper in May 1994. The Implementation Policy Paper calls for greater representation and participation of people with disabilities in all aspects of society. It recognizes that students with and without disabilities need to learn to interact and develop interdependent relationships so that, as adults, they can successfully participate together in the mainstream of American society. The Implementation Policy Paper includes the following eight principles:

1. Services and programs will be made available to students based on their individual needs, without regard to classification.

2. A continuum of alternative placements will be available to meet the needs of students with disabilities. However, no placement may effectively restrict the full appropriate participation of students with disabilities in the programs and assessments necessary for a high school diploma.

3. All students with disabilities will have equal access to a high quality program based on their individual needs and abilities and designed to enable them to achieve desired learning results established for all students. Educational placement decisions for students will be determined by a process which first considers a general education environment in the school the student would attend if he or she did not have a disability.

4. The removal of a student with a disability from the general educational environment occurs only when the needs of the student are such that, even with the use of supplementary aids and services, his or her needs cannot be met. However, consideration must be given to the impact of a student with a disability on the education of other students in the general or special education class when making placement decisions.

5. Efforts will be made to access and coordinate with other available services within a local school district, Board of Cooperative Educational Services, or agency program before a student fails in his or her current educational placement.

6. The responsibility for all students is shared among all staff of the school. Parents and guardians will have an opportunity for meaningful participation in the development of the Individualized Education Program (IEP) as equal partners with school personnel.

7. Students with disabilities will be full participants in all aspects of the school program, including extracurricular activities and State and local testing programs, to the maximum extent appropriate to their needs.

8. Students with disabilities in segregated placements will transition to general education programs, when appropriate.

Test Access and Modification for Individuals with Disabilities has been developed in a manner fully consistent with the words and spirit of the above three educational reforms. The appropriate provision of test modifications provides students with disabilities an equitable opportunity to demonstrate acquired knowledge and abilities during the administration of State and local examinations. Just as importantly, test modifications promote students with disabilities participation in State and local testing programs, as well as their access to more challenging educational programs (such as Regents or Advanced Placement courses).

This publication will be broadly distributed statewide in order to provide a consistent understanding of the requirements associated with the full and consistent provision of test access and modifications for individuals with disabilities. Consistent with the State and local accountability provisions contained in the Compact and Goals 2000, statistical information regarding the participation and performance of students with disabilities in State Education Department examinations is published annually in the Consolidated Special Education Performance Report.

A copy of A New Compact for Learning, the Least Restrictive Environment Implementation Policy Paper, the Consolidated Special Education Performance Report, and additional copies of this publication may be obtained at a Special Education Training and Resource Center (SETRC). (A statewide directory listing the location of each center is included as Appendix A.) These information materials may also be obtained by contacting the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID), One Commerce Plaza, Room 1624, Albany, New York 12234.

MODULE 1

FEDERAL AND STATE REQUIREMENTS PERTAINING TO TEST ACCESS AND MODIFICATION

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS

Important considerations for assuring appropriate test access and modifications for individuals with disabilities are prescribed in federal and State laws and regulations. The federal laws and regulations are:

- **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (20 USC 1400 et seq.)** - Formerly known as the Education of All Handicapped Children Act, this law allocates federal funds to State and local education agencies to establish and implement policies and due process procedural safeguards for the identification of students with disabilities, up to 21 years of age, and for the provision of special education programs and services in the least restrictive environment, consistent with each student's needs and abilities.
  Implementing regulations: 34 CFR Part 300

- **Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, (29 USC 794)** - This civil rights law prohibits recipients of federal funds from discriminating on the basis of disability. It provides that no otherwise qualified individual with a disability (regardless of age) shall, soley by reason of such disability, be excluded from, denied the benefits of, or subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.
  Implementing regulations: 34 CFR Sections 101.1-104.61

- **The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC 12101-12213)** - This civil rights law extends the Section 504 prohibition against discrimination to public and private entities, regardless of whether they receive federal funds.
  Implementing regulations: 28 CFR Part 35

These federal laws and regulations apply to all operations of school districts, Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), colleges/universities, agencies, corporations, and others either because they receive federal financial assistance (pursuant to Section 504) or are public or private entities (pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act). They require that qualified individuals with disabilities be provided the opportunity to participate in all programs and services, curricular and extracurricular, which are available to nondisabled individuals, including test programs and examinations. In order to permit individuals with disabilities the opportunity to benefit from such participation, reasonable accommodations, including appropriate adjustments and modifications of examinations, must be implemented. Pursuant to Section 504, the aids, benefits and services are not required to produce the identical result or level of achievement for individuals with and without disabilities, but must afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to obtain the same result, to gain the same benefit, or to reach the same level of achievement. It is

discriminatory to exclude individuals with disabilities from programs or activities, or to deny them services or accommodations.

In regard to examinations and courses, Section 309 of the Americans with Disabilities Act states:

> Any person that offers examinations or courses related to applications, licensing, certification, or credentialing for secondary or post-secondary education, professional, or trade purposes shall offer such examinations or courses in a place and manner accessible to persons with disabilities or offer alternative accessible arrangements for such individuals.

STATE LEGAL REFERENCES
KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 12

The issue of test access and modification at the elementary and secondary school levels is also addressed in Part 100 (Subchapter E: Elementary and Secondary Education) and Part 200 (Subchapter P: Students with Disabilities) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education. Both regulations address the extent to which student access must be safeguarded. Section 100.2(s) of the regulations requires that students with disabilities have access to the full range of programs and services set forth in the Part 100 regulations (including courses and State examinations) to the extent that such programs and services are appropriate for each individual student.

In addition, Section 200.2(b) of the regulations requires that each Board of Education or Board of Trustees adopt written policy to establish administrative practices and procedures ensuring that students with disabilities have the opportunity to participate in school district programs, "to the maximum extent appropriate to the needs of the student," including extracurricular programs and activities which are available to all other students enrolled in the public schools of the district. In regard to school programs and test modifications, Section 100.2(s)(2) of the regulations requires that instructional techniques and materials used by schools be modified to the extent appropriate to provide the opportunity for students with disabilities to meet diploma requirements; and Section 100.2(g) authorizes the implementation of test modifications for students with disabilities during the administration of State Education Department examinations. In addition, Section 200.4(c)(2) of the regulations requires that the Individualized Education Program (IEP) for each student with a disability list those test modifications to be used consistently by the student in the recommended educational program. In summary, Part 100 and Part 200 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education require that, to the maximum extent appropriate, students with disabilities have access to all courses, tests and examinations which are available to nondisabled students, and that they receive test modifications consistently during their school program (including tests administered by teachers in special education and general education classroom settings, and commercially developed standardized tests administered at the discretion of school districts) and during State Education Department examinations.

New York State case law has supported the State Education Department's authority to establish requirements for graduation with a high school diploma which are applicable to

all students, including those with disabilities. The case, Northport-East Northport Union Free School District vs. Ambach, was an Article 78 proceeding brought by the school district in the State Supreme Court in 1979, when the Education Department ordered the revocation of high school diplomas awarded to two students with disabilities who completed their respective IEPs, but did not pass required Regents Competency Tests (RCTs). In 1982, the Appellate Division of the New York State Supreme Court determined that the State Education Department had the authority to adopt regulations with respect to diploma requirements for all students. (In 1984, the U.S. Supreme Court denied the school district's petition for review.)

Northport-East Northport Union Free School District vs. Ambach was also investigated by the United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (OCR). In this regard, OCR determined that the denial of a diploma based on the inability of a student with a disability to meet the competency testing requirements does not constitute the denial of a benefit since the student is not a "qualified handicapped person" (i.e., the individual has not demonstrated competency in specified academic areas). Since the Education Department instructed school districts to properly design and construct IEPs for students with disabilities in regard to the competency testing requirement, and the Education Department guidelines provide for administration of the competency tests in an environment and in a manner which maximize the opportunity for students with disabilities to satisfactorily complete such tests in light of their disabilities, OCR concluded that the students were afforded an equal opportunity. Based on this case, it is clear that the State Education Department has the authority to specify course and examination criteria which must be completed by all students in order to receive a Regents or local high school diploma.

FEDERAL LEGAL REFERENCES
POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION

Subpart E of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act applies to postsecondary education programs and activities, including postsecondary vocational education programs and activities that receive or benefit from federal financial assistance. In regard to admissions and recruitment, the law states that no qualified individual with a disability may, due to his or her disability, be denied admission or be subjected to discrimination in admission or recruitment procedures. It further prohibits limits on the number or proportion of individuals with disabilities who may be admitted to such programs.

Tests or criteria used for admissions purposes may not be used if they have a disproportionate, adverse effect on individuals with disabilities unless:

- the test or criterion has been validated as a predictor of success in the education program or activity; and

- alternate tests or criteria that have a less disproportionate, adverse effect are not available.

Admissions tests, course examinations or other procedures for evaluating students' academic achievement must be selected and administered to best ensure that, when administered to an applicant with a disability, the results accurately reflect the applicant's aptitude or achievement level or any other factor the test is designed to measure, rather than reflect the applicant's disability (except where such skills are what the test is designed to measure). Such tests must be administered in facilities which are accessible to individuals with disabilities. Special editions of tests which are designed for individuals with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills must be offered as often and in as timely a manner as are other admissions tests.

Upon being accepted in a postsecondary education program, modification of academic requirements must be implemented to the extent that general academic requirements may discriminate, on the basis of a disability, against a qualified student with a disability. Such modifications may include extended time for completion of degree requirements, substitution of specific courses or degree requirements, and adaptation of the manner in which courses are conducted. The program is also barred from imposing rules, such as the prohibition of tape recorders in classrooms or of dog guides in campus buildings, which may limit the participation of individuals with disabilities in programs. In fact, programs must ensure individuals with disabilities are not denied benefits or are otherwise subjected to discrimination because of the absence of auxiliary aids, such as taped texts, interpreters, readers or adaptations of classroom equipment. (It should be noted that the postsecondary program is not required to provide attendants, individually prescribed devices, readers for personal use or study, or other devices or services of a personal nature.)

In regard to course examinations or other procedures for evaluating students' academic achievement, programs must use methods for evaluating individuals with impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills which will best ensure that results represent the student's achievement, rather than the student's disability (except where such skills are what the test is designed to measure).

FEDERAL LEGAL REFERENCES
EMPLOYMENT PRACTICES

Section B of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act requires that no qualified individual with a disability may, due to his or her disability, be subjected to discrimination by employers who receive or benefit from federal financial assistance. An employer may not use any employment test or selection criterion which tends to screen out individuals with disabilities unless:

- the test score or criterion is job-related for the position in question; and

- alternative job-related tests or criteria that do not tend to screen out as many individuals with disabilities are not available.

An employer must select and administer tests to best ensure that, when administered to an applicant or employee with a disability of impaired sensory, manual or speaking skills, the results accurately reflect the individual's job skills, aptitude, or any other factor the test

is designed to measure, rather than reflect the individual's disability (except where such factors are what the test is designed to measure).

Employers must also make reasonable accommodations for the "known physical or mental limitations" of an otherwise qualified applicant or employee with a disability (unless the employer can demonstrate that the accommodation would impose an undue hardship). Reasonable accommodations may include:

- making facilities readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities;
- job restructuring, including part-time or modified work schedules;
- acquisition or modification of equipment or devices; or
- the provision of readers or interpreters, or other similar actions.

MORE INFORMATION

More information in regard to federal and State requirements addressing test access and modification for students with disabilities and the provision of appropriate special education programs and services in the least restrictive environment may be obtained by contacting a Special Education Training and Resource Center (SETRC). (A statewide directory listing the location of each center is included as Appendix A.) SETRCs are staffed by special education training specialists, and are supported by the State Education Department Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) and by local education agencies.

Information is also available from VESID regional offices. (A statewide directory listing the regional locations of the Office for Special Education Services is included as Appendix B and a directory of Regional Educational Institution Linkages staff is included as Appendix C.) Information and technical assistance is also available from:

New York State Education Department
VESID
Special Education Policy Unit
One Commerce Plaza, Room 1624
Albany, New York 12234
(518) 473-2878

or

New York State Education Department
VESID
Educational Institution Linkages Unit
One Commerce Plaza, Room 1609
Albany, New York 12234
(518) 473-7918

MODULE 2

TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS ADMINISTERED TO STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES KINDERGARTEN THROUGH GRADE 12

INTRODUCTION

This module addresses test access and modification in regard to the tests and examinations which are ordinarily administered to public school students in New York State. These tests include special education and general education classroom tests, local testing programs (e.g., California Achievement Tests), and State Education Department examinations including Pupil Evaluation Program (PEP) tests, Program Evaluation Tests (PETs), Regents Preliminary Competency Tests (PCTs), Regents Competency Tests (RCTs) and Regents Examinations.

DEFINITION OF TEST MODIFICATIONS

Test modifications are changes in testing procedures or formats which provide students with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in test situations and to demonstrate their knowledge and abilities. Test modifications can change the way in which test items are presented to the student, the student's method of responding to test items or the process a student uses to derive responses to test items. Test modifications should not be excessive; they should alter the standard administration of a test to the least extent possible. There is no comprehensive listing of every possible test modification that may be appropriate for students, since students' needs and educational characteristics are too diverse to attempt to address all possible situations. However, a detailed description of the most commonly implemented test modifications is included in this module, in the section Types of Test Modifications (see page 15).

THE PURPOSE OF TEST MODIFICATIONS

The purpose of test modifications is to enable students with disabilities to participate in test programs on an equal basis with their nondisabled peers. They provide an opportunity for students with disabilities to demonstrate mastery of skills and attainment of knowledge without being limited or unfairly restricted due to the effects of a disability. In addition, test modifications promote the access of students with disabilities to test/examination programs as well as to more challenging courses and programs, such as Regents courses and examinations.

In determining a student's need for such modifications, emphasis must be placed on the necessity for modification, not merely the potential benefit from modification. Test modifications are provided in order to address a disability, and to the extent possible, they are intended to minimize the effects of a student's disability. Conversely, such modifications are not intended to substitute for knowledge and abilities which the student has not

achieved; they are not intended to provide an unfair advantage over students taking tests and examinations under standardized conditions. The fact that a student may be expected to achieve a higher score with test modifications is not an appropriate sole criterion for providing such modifications.

Test modifications are based on individual student needs and educational characteristics. For a Committee on Special Education (CSE), the determination regarding student eligibility for test modifications, or the specific type(s) of modifications to be provided, should neither be restricted nor automatically provided based on a student's classification.

STUDENT ELIGIBILITY FOR TEST MODIFICATIONS

There are four circumstances in which students with disabilities may be eligible to receive test modifications.

1. Students with disabilities whose Individualized Education Program includes testing modifications

The Individualized Education Program (IEP) for each student determined by the Committee on Special Education (CSE) to be eligible for special education or related services must list those test modifications to be used consistently by the student in the recommended educational program. (In order to be eligible for special education programs or services a child must be identified as a "student with a disability" under one of the thirteen disabilities listed in Section 200.1(mm) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education.) In making its decision regarding the need for test modifications, the CSE reviews all available information regarding the student's individual needs. Such information might include recent evaluations, previous school records and IEPs, classroom observations, and the student's experience on previous tests. Information and suggestions from the student's teachers, related service providers, and parents should also be sought.

2. Students who are declassified by the Committee on Special Education

As part of the annual evaluation of student progress that is conducted by the CSE, the Committee may determine that a student no longer needs to participate in special education programs or services. At such time, the CSE recommends that the student be declassified and participate in the general education program on a full-time basis. Even though such a student no longer requires special education programs or services in order to benefit from the general education program, the effects of the disability may continue to prevent the student from demonstrating the achievement of certain knowledge and skills. In such instances, a student may continue to need the test modification(s) previously documented in the IEP. If such a determination is made by the CSE and documented in the recommendation for declassification, the test modification(s) must continue to be consistently provided to the student for the balance of his or her public school education. Such test modifications may include the complete range of modifications which are available to students with disabilities, as long as they have been consistently included in the student's IEP when classified pursuant to Part 200 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of

Education. The continuation of test modifications upon declassification, however, is not automatic. During subsequent school years, if it is felt that such modification(s) is no longer appropriate, the school district may use local procedures, such as a meeting with the student's parent and CSE or Section 504 Multidisciplinary Team, to review and document the discontinuation or revision of the test modification(s).

3. Students with disabilities whose Section 504 Accommodation Plan includes test modifications

The definition of a "handicapped person" under Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act is broader than the definition of "a child with a disability" under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act and Article 89 of New York State Education Law. Under Section 504, a "handicapped person" includes anyone who:

- has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, or
- has a record of such an impairment, or
- is regarded as having such an impairment.

Students who are determined to have a disability pursuant to Section 504 who do not require special education or related services (and, therefore, may not be classified by the Committee on Special Education) are entitled to accommodations and services in the general school setting which are necessary in order for them to benefit from all programs and activities available to nondisabled students. Appropriate accommodations and services must be documented in a Section 504 Accommodation Plan (504 Plan), and may include behavioral management techniques, computer aided instruction, adjusted class schedules, use of tape recorders, test modifications and other adaptations. The complete range of test modifications which may be included in the IEP of a student who has a disability pursuant to Part 200 of the regulations may also be included in the 504 Plan for a student who has a disability pursuant to Section 504.

4. Students who acquire disabilities shortly before test administration

School principals may modify testing procedures for regular education students who experience temporary (e.g., broken arm) or long-term (e.g., paraplegia) disabilities shortly before the administration of State examinations. In such cases, when sufficient time is not available for the development of an IEP or 504 Plan, principals may authorize the following modifications which will not significantly change the student skills being tested:

- Time limit may be extended.
- Tests may be administered in a special location.
- Answers may be recorded in any manner. When answering questions designed to measure writing ability in English or a second language, such students must provide all punctuation, the spelling of more difficult words, paragraphing, etc.
- Tests may be read to students. This modification is allowed only for those students whose vision is impaired. Only those tests or parts of tests that do not measure reading comprehension may be read to such students.

Eligibility for such modifications is based on the principal's professional discretion; however, the principal may confer with CSE members or with other school personnel in making such a determination. Pursuant to Section 102.3 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, building principals are responsible for administering Education Department examinations and maintaining the integrity of examination content and programs, in accordance with directions and procedures established by the Commissioner of Education.

Prior permission need not be obtained from the Education Department for authorization of test modifications for general education students. However, a full report concerning each authorization should be sent to the Education Department along with the report forms for the applicable examinations. Also, if the student is expected to continue to need test modifications, the principal should immediately make the appropriate referral for the development of an IEP or 504 Plan.

DOCUMENTING TEST MODIFICATIONS

A student's need and eligibility for test modification must be documented in an IEP developed by the Committee on Special Education or in a Section 504 Accommodation Plan developed by the Section 504 Multidisciplinary Team. (There is no difference between the test modifications which may be provided to a student based on an IEP or 504 Plan.) Test modifications must be documented in a clear manner to ensure a consistent understanding by the CSE or 504 Team, the principal, the teacher(s) and the parents. Specific test modifications (e.g., use of word processor with spell check function) should be indicated, not generic test modification categories (e.g., answers recorded in other manner). It is appropriate to indicate the conditions or types of tests which will require test modifications (e.g., use of an amanuensis for tests having answer sheets requiring answers to be blackened), but qualifying terms such as "as appropriate" or "when necessary" are inappropriate. Test modifications should not be indicated in a test-specific manner (e.g., "calculator with fraction capability" not "calculator with fraction capability on Regents Competency Test in mathematics").

The Regents or local high school diploma earned by a student with a disability who has received test modifications during the administration of required State examinations may not include any annotation regarding the provision of test modifications, nor of any other special accommodations which the student has received.

ACCESS TO TESTS AND EXAMINATIONS

Classroom tests, quizzes and examinations are a normal part of the school experience for almost all students, including students with disabilities. In addition to the tests which are administered in special education settings or in general education settings, students with disabilities must have full appropriate access to State Education Department examinations and local test programs (e.g., California Achievement Tests).

Students with disabilities must be included in State and local testing programs to the fullest extent appropriate. The CSE, a multi-disciplinary team of professionals, must address

the extent of student participation in such testing programs. Similar to determinations regarding testing modifications, the CSE's recommendation is based on the needs, characteristics and abilities of each student - not on the student's classification (e.g., learning disability). A school district may not establish any policy or procedure which, in effect, automatically excludes (or excuses or exempts) all students with disabilities, or groups/classes of students with disabilities, from State or local test programs.

In some instances, such determinations may be made in a subject-specific manner. For example, although the school experience for a particular student may be expected to culminate with a High School Individualized Education Program Diploma, which does not require the successful completion of any State or local tests, if the student is able to master the content within a given subject area (e.g., mathematics), the IEP should indicate that the student will participate in State and local tests in that subject.

Although a CSE may expect that a student will not perform well on a State or local test, such an expectation should not automatically lead to a recommendation for exemption. Participation in such programs may create anxiety for some students but will provide important information regarding the extent and type of remediation which is needed. Also, the student will become familiar with testing formats, which may lessen anxiety during subsequent tests, and develop test-taking skills, which may contribute to improved scores on examinations required for a Regents or local high school diploma. Conversely, exempting students with disabilities from State and local test programs deprives them access to the test program, as well as to a normal school experience which provides an opportunity to demonstrate abilities and competencies. Exemption of students from State and local tests gives the appearance that students with disabilities are not capable learners and may lower the expectations held for them by school staff, as well as the perceptions held of them by themselves and by their nondisabled peers.

Local Testing Programs

Students with disabilities must have full appropriate access to the school district's testing program, including access to tests such as the Stanford Achievement Test or California Achievement Tests, which may be administered at the discretion of local school districts. Students with disabilities must participate in such local test programs unless their IEP, developed on an individual student basis, specifically indicates that the student should not participate in such tests.

Pupil Evaluation Program Tests, Regents Preliminary Competency Tests and Program Evaluation Tests

The Pupil Evaluation Program (PEP) tests and Regents Preliminary Competency Tests (PCTs) are administered to students in public and non-public schools for the assessment of student achievement and for the early identification of students who need additional assistance in developing the basic skills of reading comprehension, mathematics and writing. Early identification and the monitoring of student progress in developing basic skills are important features of the Regents Competency Testing Program. A State

Reference Point (SRP) has been established for each test, and students who score below the SRP must be provided appropriate remedial instruction.

The Program Evaluation Tests (PETs) in social studies and science are designed to measure the effectiveness of the instructional programs in public and non-public schools. These tests provide information to be used in planning, management and evaluation of educational programs at both the State and local levels. State Reference Points have not been established for the PETs in science or social studies, and remedial instruction is not required for students who obtain low scores on these tests.

In regard to the Program Evaluation Test in science, some students with disabilities will use specialized/adaptive equipment and instruction/demonstration techniques during science instruction for activities that require manipulative skills. Therefore, for the manipulative skills component of the grade 4 science test, such students should be provided with the specialized/adaptive equipment and instruction/demonstration techniques which they use in their science program, as well as the test modifications indicated in their IEPs.

All students with disabilities must be provided full appropriate access to the PEPs, PCTs and PETs. (A schedule for the administration of the PEPs, PCT and PETs, according to subject areas and grade level, is included as Appendix D). Determinations by school principals regarding such access must be based on each student's IEP, including students who attend programs operated by a Board of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) or who attend other programs located outside the school district. Each student with a disability must participate in these tests unless their IEP, as developed by the CSE, specifically indicates that the student should not participate in one or more of the tests. (Students may <u>not</u> be exempted from State or local test programs, nor from second language requirements, based on a Section 504 Accommodation Plan.) In those cases where students with severe disabilities are exempted from one or more State tests, the number of students exempted must be reported on a school district information sheet (SIS) which is submitted to the State Education Department to report the results of the test program. In determining which statewide test to administer to students with disabilities, schools must adhere to the following schedule:

- Students with disabilities who receive instruction in regular education programs of a specific grade level must be administered these tests according to the same schedule as general education students at the same grade level.
- Students with disabilities who receive instruction in graded (equivalent) special class programs must be administered these tests according to the same schedule as general education students at the same grade level.
- Students with disabilities who receive instruction in non-graded/multi-graded special class programs must be administered these tests according to the grade level schedule of general education students of the same chronological age.

If it is apparent either before or during the administration of a State test that a student for whom testing is required will achieve a score close to zero, the principal or designee may elect not to administer the test and assign a score of zero to that student. The score of zero must be included in the scores reported to the Education Department, and the

student must be provided with appropriate remediation (except for the Program Evaluation Tests in science and social studies).

Students who are absent at the time such tests are administered, and for whom testing is required, should be tested as soon as possible after they return to school. Even though students may return too late for their scores to be included in the test reports sent to the Education Department, they should be tested to determine whether remedial instruction is needed.

During the 1993-94 school year, 91 percent of students with disabilities, overall, participated in the PEP tests and PETs. A summary of student participation in each test follows:

Participation by Students with Disabilities in PEP Tests and PETs

Test	Participation Rate
Grade 3 PEP Test in Reading	90.2%
Grade 3 PEP Test in Mathematics	90.9%
Grade 4 PET in Science	92.0%
Grade 5 PEP Test in Writing	92.4%
Grade 6 PEP Test in Reading	91.8%
Grade 6 PEP Test in Mathematics	91.7%
Grade 6 PET Test in Social Studies	90.5%
Grade 8 PET in Social Studies	89.5%

Based on statistical analyses and research conducted by the New York State Education Department, the goal has been established that 98 percent of students with disabilities will participate in these tests. Students with disabilities should participate in State and local testing programs unless it is clear to the CSE that such participation is not appropriate.

Regents Examinations, Regents Competency Tests and Proficiency Examinations

Regents examinations are achievement tests for the demonstration of outstanding scholastic achievement based on rigorous State courses of study used in secondary education programs. Prepared by teacher examination committees and Education Department subject and testing specialists, they provide schools with a basis for evaluating the quality of the instruction and learning that has taken place. They are used by school personnel to identify major learning goals, offering both teachers and students a guide to important understandings, skills and concepts. The examinations also provide students, parents, guidance counselors, administrators, college admissions officers and employers with objective and easily understood achievement information for use in making educational and vocational decisions. Passing scores on the Regents Examinations in English, mathematics, science and social studies satisfy the competency testing requirements for a high school diploma. (The words "With Honor" may be added to the Regents endorsement if a student has earned an average of at least 90 in the Regents examinations in comprehensive English, global studies,

United States history and government, and in the examination(s) necessary to complete the major sequence requirement.)

The Regents Competency Tests (RCTs) are achievement tests designed to assess student proficiency in the areas of reading, writing, mathematics, science and social studies. Passing scores on the tests satisfy competency requirements for a local high school diploma.

The Proficiency Examinations in occupational education are achievement tests based on State courses of study in occupational education. Passing scores on these examinations satisfy the testing requirements for sequences in occupational education areas. The Proficiency Examinations in second languages are achievement tests designed to measure learning outcomes at Checkpoint A of the State Syllabi, *Modern Languages for Communication and Latin for Communication.*

As these examinations are administered to students upon the completion of applicable prescribed courses of study, the exemption procedure described above for the PEP tests, PETs and PCTs is not applicable. Students with disabilities, however, must be provided full appropriate access to the general education courses, or course content, which are required for administration of these examinations. (A listing of all Regents examinations, RCTs and proficiency tests, by subject area, is included as Appendix E.) In regard to Regents high school diplomas and courses, Section 100.2(e) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education requires that each public school district offer students attending its schools the opportunity to meet all the requirements for and receive a Regents high school diploma. Students must have the opportunity to take Regents courses in grades 9-12 and, when appropriate, in grade 8. It should be noted, however, that the second language proficiency examinations are optional for all students and are taken mainly by students below grade 9 who wish to earn one unit of high school credit in a second language.

USE OF ALTERNATIVE EXAMINATIONS

Section 100.2 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education makes allowance for the use of alternative examinations which measure student knowledge and skills in a manner equivalent to the State Education Department examinations described above. Alternative examinations may be used to satisfy Regents examination requirements or Regents Competency Test requirements.

REGENTS EXAMINATIONS

Scholastic Assessment Test II and College Board Achievement Test score(s) can be substituted for Regents examinations when a student is unable to take the required Regents examination because of extraordinary circumstances, but has successfully completed the Regents course of study for the subject. (The minimum acceptable SAT II/College Board scores are listed by subject area in Appendix F.)

REGENTS COMPETENCY TESTS

Two methods are available for the demonstration of knowledge and skills which are equivalent to those measured on Regents Competency Tests:

1. Students who achieve specified minimum scores on American College Tests, Scholastic Assessment Tests and College Boards may be regarded as having demonstrated competencies equivalent to those required for RCTs. (The minimum acceptable scores are listed by subject area in Appendix G.)

2. Consistent with Section 100.2(n) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, a school district may apply for a variance from the Regents Competency Test requirements prescribed in the Part 100 regulations. Such a variance, if approved by the Education Department, may allow a failing grade on a Regents examination to be equivalent to the minimum passing grade required for the RCT in the same subject area, and to satisfy such criterion for graduation with a local high school diploma.

IMPLEMENTATION OF TEST MODIFICATIONS

Consistent Implementation

Building principals must ensure that test modifications are consistently administered to students with disabilities, as specified in their IEP or Section 504 Accommodation Plan, by appropriately trained or qualified individuals throughout their school program. This includes tests, quizzes and examinations administered either in special education class settings or in general education class settings. In addition to tests administered at the discretion of the teacher(s), test modifications must be fully and consistently administered during State examinations. Any test modification permitted for PEP tests, PETs or PCTs is also permitted for RCTs. Conversely, any test modification permitted for the RCTs is also permitted for PEP tests, PETs, and PCTs. In this way, there is a single State testing program, not a series of piecemeal testing programs.

Test modifications must be fully and consistently implemented during local test programs. The use of test modifications during tests such as the California Achievement Tests (CATs), though contrary to directions of the publisher for standardized test administration, permits an equitable opportunity to demonstrate abilities and competencies. Although, from a statistical perspective, test modifications may invalidate results, there is no requirement that such students' scores be merged with those who have completed the test under standardized conditions. The school may establish several sets of scores by disaggregating information (e.g.,nondisabled students/standard test administration; students with disabilities (IEP or 504 Plan) standard test administration; and students with disabilities (IEP or 504 Plan)/nonstandard test administration). It is important to remember that test modifications are included in students' IEPs or 504 Plans because they are necessary in order to provide an equitable opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and abilities.

The requirement to ensure the consistent provision of test modifications is not restricted to the traditional school year (September to June). Pursuant to Section 200.4(c)(2)(v) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, the IEP for some students with disabilities will specify the provision of special education programs or services on a twelve-month basis. In addition, students with an IEP or 504 Plan must also be provided an equitable opportunity to participate in general education summer school programs which some school districts operate, pursuant to Part 110 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, in order to provide advanced instruction or remedial instruction. The school district operating such special education and/or general education programs is responsible for the continued implementation of test modifications included in students' IEPs or 504 Plans.

ADMINISTRATION OF DIAGNOSTIC EVALUATIONS

Pursuant to Sections 200.1(v) and 200.4(b)(4) of the regulations, a CSE must initiate an individual evaluation for each student referred due to a suspected disability. (Similar evaluation procedures must also be initiated, to the extent necessary, for a student suspected of a disability pursuant to Section 504.) An individual evaluation consists of procedures, tests or assessments used selectively with an individual student in order to determine whether a student has a disability and the extent of special education needs. (It does not include the basic tests which are administered to, or the procedures used with, all students in a grade or class.) Unlike local and State testing programs, the specific types of tests or assessments which are administered, and the manner in which they are administered (with and/or without test modifications) are left to the discretion of the evaluator since the purpose is diagnostic.

BASIS FOR NOT IMPLEMENTING TEST MODIFICATIONS

Student Refusal - In some instances, students may refuse or request to waive test modifications for local or State tests. School staff should take appropriate action to effectuate full implementation of the IEP or 504 Plan (e.g., explaining to the student the reasons for test modifications). However, where such action is not effective in altering the student's position, officials should document the incident and consider the appropriateness of additional counseling or of requesting a review of the student's program by the CSE or 504 Team.

Restrictions by Test Authorities - Special test modification considerations and restrictions apply to examinations for which the Education Department has established separate standards, such as those discussed in Module 9, and to other tests and examinations which are beyond the purview of the Education Department, such as those discussed in Modules 3 through 8.

TYPES OF TEST MODIFICATIONS

Test modifications can change the way test items are presented to a student, the student's method of responding to test items or the process a student uses to derive responses to test items. The test modifications included in students' IEPs or 504 Plans should modify the standard administration of a test to the least extent possible.

Numerous test modifications, and important considerations for including them in students' IEPs or 504 Plans, are described below. Every possible modification that may be appropriate for students with disabilities is not included, since students' needs are too diverse to attempt to address all possible situations.

Flexible Scheduling

Some students with disabilities may require flexible scheduling of examinations. These students may have learning and/or behavioral characteristics which affect the rate at which they process information. Physical disabilities, such as visual or motor impairments, may decrease students' working rate. Students who use other test modifications, such as special equipment to record responses or dictating responses to an amanuensis, may also complete examinations more slowly. Other students who have health impairments may tire easily and require frequent breaks. All of these students may require test modifications which alter the scheduling of the test in order to demonstrate knowledge and skills on an equal basis with other students.

There are two ways of addressing a student's need for flexible scheduling:

- **Time Extension** in which the test or examination is administered on the scheduled day, beginning before the specified time and/or continuing after the specified time on the same day. To facilitate the appropriate implementation of this modification, the IEP or 504 Plan should quantitatively indicate the amount of time to be provided (e.g., time and a half).

- **Testing Duration** in which the maximum amount of time a student should work without a break is specified (e.g., a ten minute break for each 40 minute test period).

Administration of Education Department Examinations over Successive Administrations

In unusual instances, a student with a disability may have physical development and/or management needs which, even with extended time, preclude completion of a State Education Department examination on the scheduled date for administration.

Physical Development and Management Needs are defined in Section 200.1(kk) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education as follows:

> *Physical development*...shall mean the degree and quality of the student's motor and sensory development, health, vitality, and physical skills or limitations which pertain to the learning process.
>
> *Management needs*...shall mean the nature of and degree to which environmental modifications and human or material resources are required to enable the student to benefit from instruction.

Due to a student's needs in regard to time extension and test duration, as specified in the IEP or 504 Plan, a student may take the Regents Competency Tests (RCTs) in

reading, writing, mathematics, global studies, United States history and government, or the occupational education proficiency examination in introduction to occupations, over successive examination administrations. Application to the Education Department for this test modification is not required. However, the school district must notify the Office of State Assessment, at the address indicated at the end of this module, at least three months prior to the scheduled date for administration. Other important considerations associated with this test modification follow:

- The student may receive time extension for completing the examination section(s) administered during the given administration.
- For each successive administration of a given examination, the current edition of the examination will be administered (e.g., Part A of the RCT in mathematics administered in June, Part B of the RCT in mathematics administered in August).
- Each administration should end at a completed section.
- Students with disabilities who are administered examinations over multiple administrations will be permitted to retake sections, if necessary (rather than retake the entire test), in order to successfully complete the examination requirement.

Administration of Education Department Examinations Over Multiple Days

This test modification is applicable to all examinations of the State Education Department which are administered at the elementary, middle and secondary school levels, including those which are necessary to earn a Regents or local high school diploma. **Implementation of this procedure requires prior approval from the State Education Department.** (Approval from the State Education Department is not required for the implementation of this test modification for local level classroom tests or other local level tests/examinations.) Application materials must be submitted to the Office of State Assessment, at the address indicated at the end of this module, at least three months prior to the date of administration. Application materials must include all of the following:

- a narrative statement from the Committee on Special Education Section 504 Multidisciplinary Team (504 Team) or the principal describing the student's need for this test modification and the manner in which test modifications are consistently implemented for the student at school;
- a copy of the student's IEP or Section 504 Accommodation Plan; and
- evaluation materials (CSE or Section 504) which demonstrate the need for this test modification.

A determination regarding the authorization of this test modification will be made by the Office of State Assessment based on recommendations from VESID. The Office of State Assessment will notify the school district of its determination. Approval for this test modification for a student will apply to all subsequent State examinations administered at the elementary, middle and secondary school levels without the submission of additional applications to the Education Department. (School districts must notify the Education Department prior to implementation of this modification for other State examinations.)

This test modification is designed to permit students with severe physical development and management needs an equitable opportunity to demonstrate abilities and competencies, and should be considered when testing over successive administrations is not appropriate. Other important considerations associated with this test modification follow:

- The examination must begin on the established date scheduled for general administration.
- The student may receive time extension for completing the examination section(s) administered during a given day.
- On each day, the student should complete each section begun so that there will be no advance knowledge of upcoming content.
- The principal is responsible for making necessary arrangements for safeguarding examination materials, including storage in an appropriate vault or safe.
- The student, proctor(s), principal and parent/guardian must complete the required affirmations concerning the security of examination materials.

Flexible Setting

For some students with disabilities, the standard location for test administration may not be appropriate. Some students are easily distracted or have difficulty remaining on task. Some students require the use of specialized equipment or other test modifications which may be distracting to others. Other students, due to severe health impairments, are unable to leave their home or the hospital. Others with visual or auditory impairments may require special lighting or special acoustics. All of these students require changes in the standard test setting.

Examples of flexible setting modifications include individual or small group administration in a separate location, and provision of special lighting, acoustics or furniture in the same or at a different location. In all instances, the special location should be one that is appropriate for test administration. Students should not be required to take examinations in corridors or other uncomfortable locations.

Revised Test Format

Some students with disabilities may not be able to take a test using the standard test format. Some students with visual, perceptual or motor impairments do not have the ability to read regular size print. Other students with behavioral, visual, perceptual or motor impairments have difficulty maintaining their place in a standard examination booklet. Some students with learning disabilities are unable to read items with standard print and spacing. All of these students require some modification of the test format.

Test modifications which change the test format include: transcription of the test to braille or large print; increasing the spacing between test items; changing the size, shape, or location of the space for answers; and placing fewer items on each page.

Modifications of test format, such as braille editions or test forms with fewer items on each page, may not be available for all standardized tests. In some instances, modifications can be made on an individual basis at the local school level. For example, a

standard test form could be altered to increase spacing or texture (with use of a felt pen) of items, or to change the location of spaces for providing answers.

On some tests, students with disabilities may be unable to complete a test item due to the item format. Whenever possible, the format of the item should be changed to allow the student to complete the item. However, this is not always possible. For example, some test items cannot be reproduced in braille. Similarly, items which are presented auditorily cannot always be signed to students with hearing impairments without changing the purpose of the item. In these unusual instances, when questions cannot be interpreted or relayed to students, such questions should be omitted from the examination and the credit for the question prorated. (In regard to the manipulative skills component of the Program Evaluation Test in science, items should be revised at the local level to permit the demonstration of equivalent skills or knowledge. For example, in regard to electrical circuits, a bell may be substituted for a light bulb for a visually impaired student.)

Omitting questions and prorating credit should not be used to eliminate items which students cannot answer due to lack of ability related to the skills or content being tested. Great care must be taken to differentiate between the inability to complete an item due to item format and the inability to complete an item due to lack of competence in the skills or knowledge being measured. For State examinations, all decisions to omit questions and prorate credit must be approved by the school principal.

Revised Test Directions

In addition to revising the format of tests, revisions are sometimes made to the test directions in order to enable students with disabilities to complete the test. Some students with behavioral or learning disabilities may be unable to interpret directions. Students with visual, perceptual, or motor impairments may be unable to read and interpret lengthy directions. These students may require modifications to test instructions.

Some examples of changes in test directions include rewriting directions in simple language, underlining key words in directions, or providing a set of directions for each new set of skills in the examination. Reading the standard directions several times at the start of the examination and rereading them for each new page of test items is another example.

Only a student who would be unable to complete test items without changing the standard instructions should be provided with this test modification. The degree of modification to the instructions should be the minimum required. The individual administering the test should be sure that the student understands the instructions, but should not provide additional information. Care must be taken to ensure that the integrity of the test is not compromised by changes made to the standard test directions.

Use of Aids to Interpret Test Items

Some students with disabilities require the assistance of special equipment or testing personnel in order to interpret test items.

Students who have visual, perceptual or motor impairments may be unable to read test items without assistance. Students with hearing impairments may be unable to hear items presented orally. Students with behavioral, motor, visual or learning disabilities may be unable to maintain their place or stay on task during the examination. These students require the use of aids during testing.

Some examples of special equipment which students may use include visual magnification devices, auditory amplification devices, auditory tapes of test items, and masks or markers which cover a portion of the examination or mark the student's place. The use of equipment, rather than personnel, helps to maintain maximum reliability and validity of test results. Proctor assistance, however, may be essential to meet the needs of some students in testing situations. Examples of proctor assistance that students may require include reading test items or providing cues to maintain on-task behavior. When a proctor reads test items to a student, the items must be read as they appear on the page. Test items should be read or signed only to those students whose reading ability is impaired because of a disability.

In cases where test items are to be read, the entire test must be read including reading passages, questions, multiple choice items, etc. In implementing this test modification for State examinations and commercially developed tests, content must be read in a neutral manner, without intonating, emphasizing or otherwise drawing attention to key words and phrases. Except for directions, passages and items must be read word-for-word, without any clarification or explanation. (However, such content may be read more than once.) In regard to tests and quizzes which are teacher developed and administered, test questions and items may be clarified at the discretion of the teacher. (Since the teacher developed the instrument, the teacher will be able to make an appropriate determination whether, and the extent to which, any clarification may be provided without compromising test validity. A given clarification of a question or item is appropriate if it can also be provided to all other students without nullifying results.)

Use of Aids to Respond to Test Items

Some students who have motor, visual or learning disabilities which affect their ability to write may be unable to record their responses to examination questions in the conventional manner. These students require the use of aids to be able to participate in the test on an equal basis with other students.

Some students use equipment to enable them to record responses. Examples of such equipment include typewriters, word processors, spell check devices, pointers, communication boards, and adaptive writing instruments. Other students may need to dictate their answers to a tape recorder or an amanuensis.

In general, the student who uses an aid to record responses must provide all information, including spelling of difficult words, punctuation, paragraphing, grammar, etc. Only those students whose disability affects their ability to spell and punctuate should be excused from providing such information. Although students with disabilities may be provided multiple test modifications, an IEP or 504 Plan may not include both a spell check

device and deletion of spelling requirements as test modifications. If a spell check device is provided as a test modification, the student will be accountable for spelling accuracy, including hyphenated words and homonyms.

Some students have the reasoning ability to complete narrative mathematics problems and involved computations, but may have visual or motor impairments which make them unable to use paper and pencil to solve computations. Some students with disabilities are unable to memorize arithmetic facts but can solve difficult word problems. These students may require the use of computational aids, such as arithmetic tables, abacuses or calculators. Only those students whose disability affects their ability to either memorize or compute basic mathematical facts should be allowed to use computational aids.

TEST MODIFICATIONS ALLOWED AND DISALLOWED

Local Tests, Pupil Evaluation Program Test, Program Evaluation Tests, Regents Preliminary Competency Tests and Regents Competency Tests

For tests requiring mathematical calculations, the following test modifications may be provided:

- Mathematics tables
- Calculators which are nonprogrammable; the following functions are authorized: addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, square root, percent, change sign and memory
- Calculators with fraction capability
- Calculators with audible functions

For tests requiring mathematical calculations, the following test modifications may **not** be provided:

- Scientific calculators with trigonometric or logarithmic functions
- Sheets containing mathematical formulas

For tests requiring written communication skills, the following test modifications may be provided:

- Delete spelling, punctuation and paragraphing requirements
- Spell check device (either a separate device or as a word processing function)
- Grammar checker

For tests requiring written communication skills, the following test modifications may **not** be provided:

- Thesaurus and dictionary publications and devices

Regents Examinations and Proficiency Examinations

The modifications in testing procedures that may be authorized when students with disabilities take competency tests may also be authorized for Regents Examinations, Occupational Education Proficiency Examinations and Second Language Proficiency Examinations in the following manner:

- Questions designed to measure reading ability in English or in a second language may be read or signed to students. The comprehension section of the Regents Examination in English may not be deleted. Students who use sign language due to a hearing impairment may use any form of sign language (American Sign Language, Signing Exact English, etc.) as "language communication" rather than "English communication" is the skill being measured.

- Answers to questions designed to measure writing ability in English or in a second language may be recorded in an alternative manner (e.g.,dictation). Spell check and grammar check devices are permitted. Students with severe spelling disabilities may be excused from spelling requirements. For students who use a spell check device or are excused from spelling requirements, the Spelling Section of the Regents Examination in English should be deleted and the examination score prorated.

- In regard to the Regents Examination in English and to second language examinations, the listening comprehension section may not be deleted but students with hearing impairments may use finger spelling for both the listening comprehension and interactive communication sections. Students who have hearing impairments but are not proficient in sign language may read these sections. Also, the oral comprehension section may be repeated more than two times but the examination should be administered in a separate location if such a modification is provided.

- Beginning in June 1996, for Regents Examinations in mathematics, all students must have a scientific calculator available. Only nonprogrammable and nongraphing scientific calculators are authorized for all students. If documented on an IEP or 504 Plan, calculators with graphing capability are authorized for students with disabilities. Also, for students with spatial relationships disabilities, the spatial relationships section of the examination may not be deleted. Coloring is permitted for single figures only, not for overlapping figures or drawings.

EXAMPLES OF TEST MODIFICATIONS

Category	Examples
Flexible Scheduling	•extended time to complete tests, specify amount (e.g., double time) •administer tests over several sessions, specify duration (e.g., sessions not to exceed 40 minutes) •administer tests in several sessions over several days*

Flexible Setting	•administer tests individually in separate location •administer tests to a small group in separate location •provide special lighting, specify type (e.g., 75 Watt incandescent light on desk) •provide adaptive or special equipment, specify type (e.g., study carrel) •provide special acoustics during testing, specify manner (e.g., minimal extraneous noises) •administer tests in location with minimal distraction, specify manner (e.g., minimal visual distractions)
Revised Test Format	•braille editions of tests •large print editions of tests •increase spacing between test items •increase size of answer blocks •reduce number of test items per page •increase size of answer bubbles •arrange multiple choice test items in vertical format with answer bubble to right of each possible choice •omit questions which cannot be revised, prorate credit
Revised Test Directions	•read directions to student •reread directions for each page of questions •simplify language in directions •highlight (or underline) verbs in instructions •provide cues (e.g., arrows and stop signs) on answer form •provide additional examples
Use of Aids	•amanuensis •tape recorder •typewriter •spell check device** •grammar check •word processor •calculator (specify type/functions) •abacus •arithmetic tables •visual magnification devices, specify type •auditory amplification devices, specify type (e.g., FM system) •auditory tape of questions •repeat oral comprehension items more than specified in standard administration directions (e.g., repeat oral comprehension test items four times) •masks (or markers) to maintain place •passages read to student

	•test passages, questions, items and multiple choice responses read to student •test passages, questions, items and multiple choice responses signed to student
Other Accommodations	•record answers in test booklet •delete requirements to provide punctuation, paragraphing and spelling**

*In order to administer Education Department examinations over successive administrations, the school district must implement the prior notification procedures specified on page 16. In order to administer State Education Department examinations over multiple days, the prior application procedures specified on page 17 must be followed.

**A student who is provided a spell checker device as a test modification is responsible for spelling accuracy. Therefore, a student provided a spell check device cannot also be excused from such requirements.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Many individuals are involved in important decisions regarding the extent to which students with disabilities will access local, State and national tests; will participate in challenging courses (e.g., Regents courses and Advanced Placement courses); the type of credential toward which their secondary school program should be directed; and long-term adult goals for higher education and/or employment. These individuals include members of the Board of Education, school superintendents, the Committee on Special Eduction and Section 504 Multidisciplinary Team, the building principal, guidance counselors, special and general education teachers, and parents. The responsibility for students with disabilities should be shared by all staff of the school, and parents must have an opportunity for meaningful participation in the development of the Individualized Education Program or Section 504 Accommodation Plan. The purpose of this section is to define the role of each and to provide suggestions for carrying out their respective responsibilities.

Boards of Education and School Superintendents

The Board of Education and school superintendent have important roles in establishing and promoting the expectation that students with disabilities are capable learners, and will be full participants in all aspects of the school program, including local and State test programs, to the maximum extent appropriate to their needs. All students with disabilities must have equal access to high quality programs, based on their individual needs and abilities, which are designed to enable them to achieve desired learning results established for all students. With regard to test modifications for students with disabilities, school superintendents should arrange for members of the Board of Education to receive information so they are familiar with the different types of test modifications and the manner by which they are matched to individual student needs. School district policies can emphasize that the use of these modifications is consistent with the school district's responsibility to maintain educational standards, and does, in fact, enhance the school's

ability to allow all students equal access to the full range of instructional and testing opportunities.

Procedures regarding the use of test modifications should be consistent for all schools within the school district and should be fully understood by the CSE, 504 Team, building administrators, teachers, related services personnel, other school staff, and parents. One means of ensuring such consistency is the inclusion of this topic in school districtwide training programs. Because principals are responsible for ensuring implementation of test modifications included in student IEPs and 504 Plans, district policy should identify the procedure by which principals will receive such information. This might be done by including the principal among those who regularly receive copies of Individualized Education Programs and Section 504 Accommodation Plans which include test modifications. Procedures should also indicate the manner in which the school district will report the use of test modifications to the State Education Department as required by Section 100.2(g)(3) of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education.

Boards of Education and superintendents should receive information regarding the extent to which students with disabilities access local, State and national achievement tests, as well as the students' performance on such tests. (For those students with severe disabilities who do not participate in local and State test programs, information should be provided regarding the special education programs and services they are provided, as well as the alternative means used to assess their effectiveness.) It is recommended that test results for students with disabilities be reported to the Board in the same manner and according to the same schedule that such information is reported for nondisabled students.

Committee on Special Education and Section 504 Multidisciplinary Team

The Committee on Special Education and Section 504 Multidisciplinary Team are responsible for identifying and documenting the student's need for test modifications. The CSE must also document student participation in State and local test programs. These determinations are made when a student is initially referred to the CSE or 504 Team, is reviewed periodically for as long as the student receives special education services or accommodations, and is reviewed when the student is determined to no longer need special education accommodations, programs or services.

In making its decision, the CSE or 504 Team reviews all available information regarding the student's individual needs. Such information might include recent evaluations, previous school records and IEPs or 504 Plans, classroom observations, and the student's experience on previous tests. Information and suggestions from the student's teachers, parents and others must also be considered.

Members of the CSE and 504 Team should be knowledgeable of the types of test modifications that may be used by students with disabilities, the types of tests that are commonly administered, and the extent to which test modifications are allowed/disallowed for use on certain tests (e.g., Regents examinations). Such information may be obtained from guidance counselors, teachers, school testing personnel and the principal.

Finally, in regard to the CSE, it should be noted that beginning at age 15 (or earlier if appropriate) a shift should occur in the focus of the IEPs and educational programs for students with disabilities. Appropriate transition services must be identified and provided to such students to promote their movement from school to post-school activities, including, but not limited to, postsecondary education, vocational training, integrated competitive employment (including supported employment), continuing and adult education, adult services, independent living and community participation. The coordinated set of services/activities must be based on the student's abilities, needs, preferences and interests. Determinations regarding the extent and types of transition services which are appropriate must be made on an individual student basis by the CSE, carefully considering any information which may be provided by the student, the student's parent or guardian, appropriate agency representatives (including representatives from institutions of higher education), and others. More information in this regard is available in the State Education Department publication Transition Services, A Planning and Implementation Guide, which may be obtained at a Special Education Training and Resource Center (SETRC). (A statewide directory listing the location of each center is included as Appendix A.) The publication may also be obtained by contacting the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) at the address or phone number listed at the end of this module.

School Principal

The principal promotes the expectation at the school building level that students with disabilities are capable learners who will participate and succeed in all local and State test programs. The principal in each school is responsible for implementing the school district's policies which provide equal access to instructional and testing programs for all students. Principals have direct responsibility for ensuring that test modifications included in each student's IEP or 504 Plan are fully and consistently implemented during the administration of local and State achievement tests, as well as by general and special education teachers during the administration of classroom quizzes, tests and examinations. If it is felt that test modifications for a particular student should be added, revised or discontinued, a referral must be submitted to the CSE or 504 Team to review the student's program.

On an emergency basis, pursuant to Section 102.3 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education, principals may exercise professional discretion in allowing test modifications for a student who acquires a disability shortly before the administration of a State examination, without sufficient time for the development of an IEP or 504 Plan.

Building principals should also be familiar with the policies and procedures included in one or more of the following State Education Department publications which are revised annually:

- New York State Pupil Evaluation Program Test and Program Evaluation Tests - School Administrator's Manual
- New York State Preliminary Competency Tests - School Administrator's Manual
- Regents Examinations, Regents Competency Tests & Proficiency Examinations - School Administrator's Manual

These publications address general requirements for the administration of the various State examinations, as well as special considerations for students with disabilities and students who have limited English proficiency. The manuals are available, at no charge, from the State Education Department, Office of State Assessment, at the address indicated at the end of this module.

Guidance Counselors

Guidance counselors and guidance programs play an important role in ensuring school success for all students, kindergarten through grade 12. Pursuant to Section 100.2(j)(i), for all students in kindergarten through grade 6, the guidance program must be coordinated with teaching staff to prepare students to participate effectively in their current and future educational programs, to help students who exhibit any attendance, academic, behavioral or adjustment problems, to educate students in the avoidance of child sexual abuse, and to encourage parental involvement.

For all students in grades 7 through 12, pursuant to Section 100.2(j)(ii) of the regulations, a guidance counselor must annually meet with students, individually or in small groups, and review each student's educational progress and career plans. Instruction at each grade level must be provided by guidance counselors, or by classroom teachers in cooperation with school counselors, to help students learn about various careers and career planning skills. Other advisory and individual or group counseling assistance must also be provided, to the extent necessary, to enable students to benefit from the curriculum and to help students develop and implement postsecondary education and career plans. It is essential that guidance counselors have a thorough understanding of the types of examinations which are required both during and subsequent to the public school experience of students with disabilities, as well as the types of admissions, examination and programmatic accommodations which are available.

In regard to counseling services, Subpart D of Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act states that a school which provides personal, academic, or vocational counseling, guidance, or placement services to its students must provide such services without discrimination on the basis of disability. Students with disabilities must not be counseled toward more restrictive career objectives than are nondisabled students with similar interests and abilities. (It should be noted that a similar requirement is included in Subpart E of Section 504 for guidance programs at the postsecondary education level.)

During the annual guidance review, attention should be focused on the level of courses in which the student is enrolled; the extent of past and future participation in local, State and national achievement tests; the types of test modifications which are included in the student's IEP or 504 Plan and the extent to which such modifications may be implemented on other tests (such as Scholastic Assessment Tests and American College Tests); and the student's secondary education and postsecondary education goals.

Special Education Teacher

The special education teacher's direct contact with the student in classroom instruction and testing provides a strong basis for recommending appropriate test modifications and student participation in local and State testing programs. The special education teacher may be the individual to initially recognize a student's need for test modifications. The teacher, therefore, can provide the CSE or 504 Team with essential information for revision of the student's IEP or 504 Plan when test modifications are recommended. They must fully and consistently implement test modifications as specified in students' IEPs or 504 Plans, and refer students back to the CSE or 504 Team when it is suspected that test modifications should be added, revised or discontinued.

The special education teacher should work closely with related service providers and general education teachers who provide services to students with disabilities. This cooperative relationship ensures consistent and appropriate use of instructional and test modifications in all settings. The special education teacher may serve as a consultant to provide information and advice on test modifications for students, and may also provide direct assistance to school staff in the development and administration of tests using test modifications which are included in a student's IEP.

General Education Teacher

The general education classroom teacher has an active and significant role in the use of test modifications for students with disabilities. Students with disabilities must have full appropriate access to the programs and services which are available to their nondisabled peers. Teachers are expected to be able to work effectively with all students who are appropriately placed in their classrooms. In some instances, this will require that general education teachers modify or adapt instruction and testing. They must fully and consistently implement test modifications as specified in each student's IEP or 504 Plan, and refer students to the CSE or 504 Team when it is suspected that test modifications should be added, revised or discontinued.

Test modifications which have been approved for use by a student must be used consistently in both special and general education settings. General education classroom teachers should be aware of the different types of test modifications and should be skilled in their implementation. Strategies to assist teachers in preparing for this responsibility include a review of the current literature on the subject, attendance at in-service training (periodically conducted by the State Education Department and by training specialists from the Special Education Training and Resource Center (SETRC) network), and consultation with special education teachers and the Committee on Special Education and Section 504 Multidisciplinary Team.

Parents may have questions regarding the use of test modifications within the general education setting. As the teacher providing instruction in a given subject area, general education teachers communicate with parents regarding the nature and rationale of modifications in use.

Parents

Parents are encouraged to exercise their right to participate in the development of recommendations for special education programs and services, and special accommodations, for their child who has a disability. Parents, knowing the strengths and needs of their son or daughter, should contribute to the discussion about the need for test modifications. Providing such information to appropriate persons at meetings with the CSE or 504 Team, or at other times during the year, will help to ensure that an appropriate program is being provided. Parents should be aware of the purpose of test modifications and understand the rationale for their provision.

Parents who believe that their child with a disability is being denied appropriate use of test modifications, or access to local or State tests, may request a meeting with the CSE, principal, guidance counselor or others. Parents may also pursue their due process rights which are specified in Section 200.5 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Education or in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

Parents should have adequate information regarding the variety and use of test modifications. Such information may be obtained from members of the Committee on Special Education, Section 504 Multidisciplinary Team, the principal, guidance counselors and teachers. Parents should refer their child to the CSE or 504 Team if they feel that test modifications should be added, revised or deleted.

PRACTICE MATERIALS

Practice materials are provided by the State Education Department to school districts for the grade 3 Pupil Evaluation Program tests, to be administered by school teachers to students shortly before the administration of the PEP tests. No other practice materials are available from the State Education Department for the assessments discussed in this module.

Commercially developed practice materials, primarily for Regents examinations, are available in many book stores and public libraries.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information regarding requirements for Regents and local high school diplomas, the administration of State Education Department examinations and the appropriate use of test modifications contact:

New York State Education Department
Office of State Assessment
Education Building Annex, Room 771
Albany, New York 12234
(518) 474-5099

For more information regarding the development of the Individualized Education Program and roles and responsibilities of persons involved in the planning and preparation of test modifications, contact a SETRC. (A statewide directory listing the location of each center is included as Appendix A.) SETRCs are staffed by special education training specialists, and are supported by the State Education Department Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (VESID) and by local education agencies.

Information is also available from VESID regional offices. (A statewide directory listing the regional locations of the Office for Special Education Services is included as Appendix B.) Information and technical assistance are also available from:

New York State Education Department
VESID
Office for Special Education Services
One Commerce Plaza, Room 1624
Albany, New York 12234
(518) 473-2878 or
(518) 486-4678

MODULE 3

HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DIPLOMAS AND GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TESTS

INTRODUCTION

The high school diploma is a minimum qualification for many types of employment and for admission to most postsecondary educational programs. Because of the importance of a high school diploma, the New York State High School Equivalency (HSE) Program was established by the New York State Education Department more than 45 years ago to assist people who have not completed a formal program leading to graduation from high school with a Regents or local high school diploma.

Over 90,000 people annually participate in the High School Equivalency Program. Research has demonstrated that recipients of a High School Equivalency Diploma are more likely to be employed and to earn more than high school dropouts. The HSE diploma is also of great value to persons who wish to qualify for union apprenticeship programs, for certain types of employment, or for promotion in industry. In addition, most postsecondary educational institutions recognize and admit individuals with such diplomas who meet their established admissions requirements.

The High School Equivalency Diploma is not intended to replace the Regents or Local High School Diplomas as the primary credentials which should culminate the secondary school program for students with disabilities. However, the HSE diploma is preferable to either a High School Individualized Program Education Diploma or a Local Certificate (neither of which require achievement of any minimum competencies or quality standards which are applicable to all recipients), and is certainly preferable to having a student drop out with no credential.

REQUIREMENTS FOR A NEW YORK STATE HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DIPLOMA

In order to earn a New York State High School Equivalency Diploma, an individual must meet each of the following requirements:

1. The individual must not have graduated from high school with a Regents or Local High School Diploma, or already qualified for the New York State High School Equivalency Diploma.

2. The individual must take the General Educational Development (GED) test and receive a satisfactory score.

3. The individual must have lived within New York State for at least one month prior to taking the General Educational Development (GED) tests or receiving a New York State High School Equivalency Diploma.

4. On the date of GED testing, the individual must meet one of the following age criteria:
-the individual must be 19 years of age or older; or
-the candidate must be at least 17 years of age and either not have been regularly enrolled in a full-time high school program of instruction for at least one year or be a member of a high school class that has graduated; or the individual must be at least 16 years of age, must have been enrolled in an approved alternative high school equivalency preparation program, and must be referred for testing by his or her program coordinator, or
-the individual must be at least 17 years of age and be a resident of a narcotic addiction control center, an inmate of a correctional institution, or a resident patient in a hospital in New York State. In addition, acquisition of the High School Equivalency Diploma must be an integral part of the individual's educational rehabilitation program.

As an alternative to taking and passing the GED tests, an individual may also qualify for a HSE diploma by successfully completing at least 24 college credits as a recognized candidate for a college-level degree or certificate in an approved program of study.

INFORMATION ABOUT GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TESTS

Most individuals who wish to earn a New York State High School Equivalency Diploma will take the GED tests of the American Council on Education (ACE). The GED tests are available in English, Spanish, and French language editions. The required GED tests are:

- Test 1 - Writing Skills (Part I, multiple choice; Part II, essay)
- Test 2 - Social Studies
- Test 3 - Science
- Test 4 - Interpreting Literature and the Arts
- Test 5 - Mathematics

PREPARATION FOR TAKING THE GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TESTS

Individuals are not required to take any courses or to prepare in any way for the GED tests. The courses and examinations which the student has taken while in high school, and the student's performance in such courses and examinations, will not affect eligibility for a High School Equivalency Diploma. High School Equivalency Preparation Programs are available in virtually all school districts and Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES), and must be available to students with disabilities, without having to drop out of school or be declassified, in the same manner they are available to nondisabled students. (During the 1993-94 school year, 1,182 students with disabilities participated in Alternative

High School Equivalency Preparation Programs.) There are two types of such alternative school programs:

- Alternative High School Equivalency Preparation Programs, for students at least 16 years of age and under the age of 18 (pursuant to Section 100.7(j) of the regulations)

- High School Equivalency Preparation Programs, for students at least 18 years of age and under the age of 21 (pursuant to Section 100.7(k) of the regulations)

For individuals who are no longer enrolled in school, many public schools offer, through their continuing education programs, classes for those who want help preparing for the GED tests. These classes are usually free or very low in cost.

GED SCORE REQUIREMENTS FOR EARNING THE HIGH SCHOOL EQUIVALENCY DIPLOMA

Individuals who meet the residence and age requirements for a New York State High School Equivalency Diploma may be awarded such a diploma if they meet one of the criteria described below:

- If an individual was first administered the GED tests prior to September 1, 1985, a standard score of 35 or more on each of the five tests *and* a total standard score of 225 or more for all five tests must be achieved.
- If an individual was first administered the GED tests on or after September 1, 1985, a standard score of 40 or more on each of the GED tests *and* a total standard score of 225 or more for all five tests must be achieved.

An individual may take the General Educational Development Tests more than once. A period of at least two months must elapse between testing periods. On each retesting, on a different form of the examination, the individual has the option either to retake one or two of the five tests in the battery, or of taking all five tests. Eligibility for a HSE diploma will be based on the highest score achieved on each of the five tests.

The High School Equivalency Diploma earned by a student with a disability who has received test modifications during the administration of the General Educational Development Tests may not include an annotation regarding the provision of such test modifications.

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS IN TAKING THE GENERAL EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT TESTS

The GED tests and GED test centers are accessible for individuals with disabilities. However, standard test administration procedures may not be appropriate for some individuals with disabilities wishing to earn a New York State High School Equivalency (HSE) Diploma. In these cases, a completed application and supporting documentation must be sent to the New York State Education Department, High School Equivalency Program Office, at the address indicated at the end of this module, in order to receive prior

approval of modifications to be implemented during the administration of the GED tests. Special testing accommodations requests for individuals with physical, psychological and/or specific learning disabilities must be verified. All requests are evaluated and must be determined to be appropriate to the nature of the disability. Any administration of GED tests with special accommodations without prior authorization will be disqualified and not scored.

APPLICATION PROCEDURES

Each request for test modifications must include the following materials:

- A cover letter from a doctor, school program, guidance counselor or other appropriate professional that lists the specific modification(s) necessary for the individual to have a fair opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and abilities.
- A completed application for testing that establishes the individual's eligibility to test or retest and identifies a test center. It is not necessary to select a test date as one will be scheduled by special arrangement.
- Documentation to substantiate the need for the specific test modification(s) requested. For individuals with **physical disabilities**, such documentation must include:

  1. a diagnosis from existing medical records of the condition for which the individual is being treated, and
  2. a statement indicating, in layperson's terms, how this condition (or prescribed medication) adversely affects the individual's ability to perform under standard test administration conditions.

- Documentation is needed to substantiate modifications for individuals with **learning disabilities** and/or **psychological disabilities**. Such documentation must include:

  1. a recent Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Accommodation Plan (504 Plan), if one has been developed, and
  2. psychological evaluations, or
  3. educational and psychological test results, or
  4. any other substantial documentation of the disabilities and the related accommodations requested.

A copy of the IEP or 504 Plan identifying the specific modifications is not sufficient documentation alone upon which to approve requested test modifications. It is essential that certifying professionals describe the individual's disability and the reasons why requested test modifications are necessary. The certifying professional must also list his or her qualifications for diagnosing learning disabilities or psychological conditions in recommending such accommodations. Applications may be denied if the qualifications and employment of the certifying professional are not indicated.

Professionals qualified to document an individual's need for test modifications include medical doctors, psychologists, educational diagnosticians, guidance counselors, rehabilitation

counselors/therapists or social services staff. When multiple modifications are requested in order to accommodate the needs of an individual with severe disabilities, the professional must have training appropriate to the diagnosis. An ophthalmologist, for example, could diagnose blindness but not a hearing impairment.

AUTHORIZED TEST MODIFICATIONS

Audio Cassette

There is one U.S. English language audio cassette tape of the GED test. It is accompanied by a large print reference manual (test book) with enlarged graphics. The individual must have a documented visual, visual-motor, or perceptual disability that adversely affects ability to obtain information from the standard printed word.

Large Print

There are two forms of the U.S. English language large print test. An individual may test on the large print edition under normal time limits simply upon request. However, administration of the large print edition under special conditions, such as time extension or in a private room, requires documentation of the special need.

Braille

There is one form of the U.S. English language braille test. The braille edition uses level 2 braille and Nemeth code. The braille edition is accompanied by a regular print reference manual (test book).

Extension of Time Limits

The GED tests were developed so that approximately 85 percent of individuals are able to finish comfortably within the prescribed time limits under standard conditions. The time limits are extended under special conditions or when the audio cassette or braille editions are used. Those with disabilities often require extra time to answer questions and may become easily fatigued. Individuals with physical or psychological impairments will receive extra time as is warranted by a professional assessment of their needs. Up to twice the normal time limits may be allowed for each of the tests. Each test may be administered on a different day, but each test must be completed on the day that it is started. Administration of all tests should be completed in no more than two weeks.

Administration in a Special Location

Testing in a private room at the test center is available to those who, because of an illness or disability, need to be away from others. It is also available to those whose specific learning disabilities or psychological condition make testing in a group distracting to them or to others. Some individuals may be non-ambulatory or may require special equipment or care that would preclude their testing at the local test center. In such documented cases,

arrangements can be made to test at home or at some other location that is suited to the needs of the individual.

Frequent Breaks

Some individuals, because of physical discomfort or because of their inability to concentrate for extended periods of time, require frequent breaks during testing. For breaks between parts of the test, such as between the Social Studies and Science Tests, no special permission is required. For breaks during a test, such as during the Social Studies Test, special permission from the HSE Program Office is required.

Answers Recorded in a Special Manner

Some individuals are unable to record their responses to test questions in the conventional manner. Individuals with documented physical disabilities may respond in whatever manner is appropriate for them. Their responses will be transcribed by the proctor onto the standard answer sheets to allow normal processing.

Scribe

A scribe, sometimes called a secretary, amanuensis or recorder, is someone who records the answers to multiple-choice questions or the essay as dictated by the individual. For essay items, spelling of more difficult words, punctuation, paragraphing, etc., must be provided by the individual. This modification is appropriate for those who have difficulty writing as a result of visual or physical impairments or specific learning disabilities. For those with limited use of their arms, the scribe is also responsible for turning pages of the test booklet or operating the audio cassette player.

Interpreter

A certified interpreter may be used to interpret the test instructions and essay topic only -- not the multiple-choice test questions -- to individuals who are deaf or have severe hearing impairments. Such an interpreter must not be a relative or friend of the individual. The test takers may also have up to twice the normal time limit to complete each part of the test. Also, an open-captioned, sign language video tape, "GED Test Administration for Deaf Candidates," provides test instructions for each part of the test.

Calculator

Individuals who are legally blind are entitled to use a talking calculator or abacus on the Mathematics Test only. Individuals with physical or learning disabilities may be granted the use of a calculator only by written permission of the GED Testing Service. The need for use of a calculator must be documented by a qualified professional. Calculators with advanced memory functions that can store both problems and answers in their memory are prohibited in all cases.

Accommodations Not Allowed

The following test modifications may not be authorized for the GED Tests: computers, rulers, alphabet cards, word processors, spell checking programs or readers.

PRACTICE MATERIALS

Practice materials are not available from the State Education Department for the General Educational Development tests. Commercially developed practice materials, however, are available in many book stores and public libraries.

MORE INFORMATION

Information and materials for applying for test modifications for the General Educational Development tests are available from:

New York State Education Department
High School Equivalency Program Office
P.O. Box 7348
Albany, NY 12224
(518) 474-5906

Your:
Local Library
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High School

MODULE 4

ADVANCED PLACEMENT PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

The Advanced Placement (AP) Program is owned by the College Board, which contracts with Educational Testing Service (ETS) for administrative and operational services. The program, established approximately 40 years ago, provides high school students worldwide an opportunity to access college-level material through participation in an AP course, and provides them the opportunity to demonstrate knowledge and skills by taking an AP Examination. Students benefit by participating in AP courses and examinations by learning a subject in greater depth, developing skills that will promote successful study in college, and demonstrating to colleges their willingness to undertake challenging course work. The AP Program encourages students with disabilities to participate in AP courses and examinations.

Almost 50 percent of secondary schools in the United States participate in the AP Program, serving approximately 15 percent of their college-bound students. On average, 65 percent of those who take an AP Examination receive a grade that is acceptable for college credit, advanced placement, or both. AP courses and examinations are available in the following content areas:

- Art
  - History of Art
  - Studio Art (Drawing Portfolio, General Portfolio)
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Computer Science
  - Computer Science A
  - Computer Science AB
- Economics
  - Microeconomics
  - Macroeconomics
- English
  - Language and Composition
  - Literature and Composition
- French
  - Language
  - Literature
- German Language
- Spanish
  - Language
  - Literature
- Government and Politics
  - Comparative
  - United States
- History
  - United States
- Latin
  - Vergil
  - Latin Literature
- Mathematics
  - Calculus AB
  - Calculus BC
- Music Theory
- Physics
  - Physics B
  - Physics C (Mechanics, Electricity and Magnetism)
- Psychology

Students should be selected for participation in AP courses on the basis of their preparation for such a course, their willingness and ability to meet its academic challenges,

and the level of support they have from school staff, family and friends. (It should be noted that all students are permitted to use scientific calculators with graphing capability on appropriate AP Examinations.)

Each AP course culminates with an AP Examination which is newly developed each year by committees comprised of college and high school faculty appointed by the College Board and aided by consultants from ETS. Virtually all examinations (except Studio Art which is a portfolio assessment) include multiple-choice sections and constructed response sections that include essay writing, problem solving, programming, speaking, and singing. Each AP Examination grade is reported on a five-point scale:

5-extremely well qualified
4-well qualified
3-qualified
2-possibly qualified
1-no recommendation

Results of the AP Examinations are sent to students, their secondary schools, and any colleges they select.

A student who earns a grade of 3 or better on an AP Examination is generally considered qualified to receive credit for the equivalent course in one of the 2,900 colleges and universities that give credit for AP Examinations. In general, studies indicate that AP grades of 5 and 4 are comparable to a college course grade of A (in some institutions, an AP grade of 4 is comparable to a college course grade of B). An AP grade of 3 is approximately equal to a college course grade of B in many institutions (in some institutions, it is more comparable to a college course grade of C). The American Council of Education (ACE) recommends that colleges and univerisities award credit for AP grades of 3 or better on any AP examination.

Before Requesting Test Modifications

Not all students with disabilities need test modifications in order to demonstrate knowledge and abilities. Before making arrangements to take an Advanced Placement Examination, students with disabilities should determine whether they can complete the examination without the use of test modifications; within the standard time limits, and using the standard test booklet and answer sheet. The grade report for students taking an AP Examination with modifications will include the designation "Nonstandard Administration" or "Certified Disability." (The student will have the option as to which designation is inserted.)

Eligibility for Test Modifications

In order for a student with a disability to be eligible to take an Advanced Placement Examination with test modifications, the student must:

- have a disability which necessitates test modifications, and

- have documentation on file at school (the disability and need for the test modifications must be documented in an Individualized Education Program (IEP), Section 504 Accommodation Plan (504 Plan) or in a signed statement from an appropriate professional such as a physician, psychologist, child study team, or reading specialist).

Authorized Test Modifications

Proctors who administer an AP Examination will be knowledgeable about the kinds of lifestyle accommodations that have been made during the school year to support a student who has a disability in order to establish an appropriate, reasonable and comfortable testing environment for the student. For example, if a school provides sign language interpreter services for students who have a disability due to deafness, the AP Coordinator should offer such services to AP students who are deaf.

Photo-Enlarged Examinations and Answer Sheets

Photo-enlarged examinations (135 percent, on paper 11 inches wide and 17 inches long) and answer sheets may be approved for students with visual impairments. If students using photo-enlarged editions of the examination take the examination under standard conditions, with no additional time, the annotation "Nonstandard Administration" will not appear on their grade report.

Braille Examinations

Braille examinations are available in almost all AP subjects.

Audio Tapes

Complete examinations are available on audio tapes for some AP subjects.

Scripts

Students who are deaf or hard of hearing may request a written script of the audio tapes used in the listening and speaking sections of the modern languages examinations. Such scripts are usually translated to the student by a sign language interpreter. (Any person who assists a student with a disability during an AP Examination may not be a member of the student's family, a prospective candidate for the same AP Examination, or an AP teacher.)

Interpreters

If the school provides a sign language interpreter to accommodate the needs of students who are deaf during the school year and for other standardized examinations, the AP Coordinator should offer the same accommodation for students who are deaf taking the AP Examination. Interpreters are to translate any audible statements made during the examination administration (e.g., instructions regarding forms completion, when to begin the examination, when to end the examination).

Transcribed Responses

If a student cannot record responses directly on the answer sheet or essay book provided, a braille slate, typewriter or computer (with prior approval) may be used and/or responses may be dictated to an amanuensis who will record the student's comments verbatim during the examination.

Use of Colored Overlays

Students who have disabilities due to dyslexia may be permitted to use colored overlays to help them read the examination. The colored overlays should be provided by the school or the student.

Time Extension/Limited Test Duration

As a general guideline, the AP Program authorizes up to double the testing time. To avoid fatigue for a student, a testing day should not exceed 6 hours.

If extensive time is required, an AP Examination may be administered over consecutive days. In implementing this modification, testing on the first day should be discontinued after the multiple-choice section of the examination so that the student has no advanced knowledge of upcoming content. The free response section should be administered in a similar fashion during the next day(s).

If a student's disability necessitates the administration of the examination over restricted time periods, in addition to the scheduled, standard break, the student may be permitted an unscheduled rest period. During such rest period(s), examination materials will be closed or collected in order to ensure examination security.

PRACTICE MATERIALS

At the time of publication of this document, practice materials are not available from the Educational Testing Service for Advanced Placement Examinations; however, a lending library is currently being developed. Commercially developed practice materials are also available in many bookstores and public libraries.

MORE INFORMATION

Information materials regarding the administration of Advanced Placement Examinations to students with disabilities are available from:

AP Services
P.O. Box 6671
Princeton, NJ 08541-6771
(609) 771-7300
TTY: (609) 882-4118

MODULE 5

PRELIMINARY SAT/NATIONAL MERIT SCHOLARSHIP QUALIFYING TEST (NMSQT) SAT I: REASONING TEST AND SAT II: SUBJECT TESTS

INTRODUCTION

Most colleges and universities rely upon multiple criteria in selecting students for undergraduate admission (first year college students). Admissions officers look for evidence of achievement, motivation and intellectual curiosity. The most important criterion is usually an evaluation of academic performance, including an appraisal of the standards and rigor of the student's secondary school program. Many colleges and universities also place heavy emphasis on recommendations from teachers, essays prepared by the applicants and applicant interviews. Other important considerations may include special talents (musical, artistic, literary and athletic); active commitment to social, political or environmental issues; participation in student government; extra curricular activities; volunteer work; and employment.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact any college and university in which they are interested, prior to submitting admissions applications, in order to determine the availability of accommodations in admissions procedures requirements and the program and boarding accommodations which would be available upon enrollment. Students and their parents may also review the Directory of Higher Education Services for Students with Disabilities, which may be accessed at regional offices of the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (listed in Appendix H) or through public libraries.

Many colleges and universities also use standardized assessment information as part of the selection process. The SAT I: Reasoning Test and SAT II: Subject Tests, as well as the ACT Assessment which is discussed in Module 6, are frequently required as part of the application process since they provide consistent information, student-to-student, on national and worldwide bases.

The content of the Preliminary SAT(PSAT)/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (NMSQT) is very similar to that of the SAT I: Reasoning Test. It includes two verbal sections and two mathematics sections. PSAT/NMSQT scores are not to be sent to colleges and/or used for admissions. The intent is to allow students a "no-risk" opportunity to practice for the SAT I without worrying about colleges seeing their scores. This test has two primary purposes:

- It provides experience at taking a test which is very similar to the SAT I, and
- It is an initial consideration in the competition for National Merit Scholarships.

The SAT I: Reasoning Test is usually administered in the spring of the junior year and/or the fall of grade 12 in order to predict the likelihood of success in college. This test does not measure intelligence, motivation, creativity or special talents - it measures verbal and mathematical reasoning.

The verbal questions test the student's ability to:

- understand and analyze written material
- recognize relationships between parts of a sentence
- establish relationships between pairs of words

The mathematics questions test the student's ability to solve problems using:

- arithmetic
- algebra
- geometry

The SAT II: Subject Tests measure the student's knowledge and skills in particular subject areas. All subject tests take one hour of testing time (for administration under standard conditions) and consist entirely of multiple-choice questions, except for the Writing Test which includes a 20-minute essay and 40 minutes of multiple-choice questions. For administration under standard conditions, the use of a calculator is permitted only for Mathematics Level IC and Level IIC. The following SAT II: Subject Tests are available:

- Writing
- Literature
- American History and Social Studies
- World History
- Mathematics Level I
- Mathematics Level IC
- Mathematics Level IIC
- Biology
- Chemistry
- Physics
- Chinese with Listening
- French (reading only)
- French with Listening
- German (reading only)
- German with Listening
- Modern Hebrew
- Italian
- Japanese with Listening
- Latin
- Spanish (reading only)
- Spanish with Listening
- English Language Proficiency

BEFORE REQUESTING TEST MODIFICATIONS

Not all students with disabilities need test modifications in order to demonstrate knowledge and abilities. Before making arrangements to take the PSAT/NMSQT, SAT I or SAT II, students with disabilities should determine whether they can complete the test(s) without the use of test modifications, within the standard time limits, and using the standard test booklet and answer sheet.

The scores for students taking such tests with modifications may not reflect educational ability in the same manner as scores for students completing the tests under standardized conditions. Therefore, the score report for all students taking the PSAT/NMSQT, SAT I or SAT II with test modifications will include the designation "Nonstandard Administration." (The types of modifications provided and the reasons why modifications were necessary will not be indicated.) Final responsibility for interpreting test results will rest with the score recipients (e.g., college and university admissions officers).

ELIGIBILITY FOR TEST MODIFICATIONS

In order for a student with a disability to be eligible to take the SAT Program tests with test modifications, the student must:

- have a disability which necessitates test modifications,
- have documentation on file at school (the disability and need for test modifications must be documented in an Individualized Education Program (IEP), Section 504 Accommodation Plan (504 Plan), or in an evaluation completed by a qualified professional), and
- have test modifications administered for classroom tests and/or standardized tests provided by the school.

In some instances, a student with a documented disability who does not receive accommodations in school may still be eligible for accommodations on a SAT Program test. To request an exception to the accommodations requirement above, an **evaluation** completed by a qualified professional (i.e., a person licensed or certified to diagnose the student's ability) explaining why the student needs the test modifications must be submitted to Educational Testing Services, Inc. A panel of qualified professionals will review the evaluation. Materials received for special consideration that are postmarked after the registration deadline will be considered only for the next available test date.

A *Qualified Professional*, as a general rule, is an individual who is licensed or certified in a medical or allied health discipline, and who can diagnose particular disabilities. For example, an ophthalmologist can diagnose vision disabilities; and otolaryngologist or clinical audiologist can diagnose hearing disabilities; and a clinical or school psychologist or a learning disability specialist can diagnose learning disabilities.

Educational Testing Service (ETS) recommends that students with temporary disabilities consider registering for a later test date in the national testing program unless an admissions application deadline requires earlier testing. Colleges or scholarship programs will sometimes extend deadlines upon receiving special requests for such extensions. If accommodations are required, a physician's statement must be on file at the school verifying that the student's disability will exist at the time of the nonstandard administration and that the disability requires the requested accommodations.

TEST MODIFICATIONS AUTHORIZED UNDER PLAN A

The SAT Services for Students with Disabilities has established two testing plans for students with disabilities. (It should be noted that the same types of modifications which are available for the SAT I and SAT II are also available for the PSAT/NMSQT.) Plan A (special accommodations for SAT I or SAT II) is available to students with documented hearing, visual, physical, and/or learning disabilities. In addition to standard size print editions, the SAT I (reasoning test) is available in four editions to accommodate the needs of individuals with disabilities:

- Large print
- Braille (The verbal sections are available in regular grade 2 braille. The mathematics sections use the 1972 revised Nemeth code.)
- Cassette (Schools should order either the regular print or large print editions or the raised-line braille diagrams to provide the necessary diagrams for the mathematics sections.)
- Script (This edition is for use by a reader if a student cannot use any of the above editions.)

The SAT II (subject tests) are available in regular print and large print editions. Most Subject Tests are currently available in braille; additional Subject Tests will be provided in braille with a minimum notice of 12 weeks.

Answer Sheets

Responses may be recorded on machine-scanable or large-block answer sheets. Students who cannot fill in an answer sheet may use a typewriter or a braille device, or they may use a reader or another person to record their answers.

Extended Testing Time

A standard administration of the SAT I has a time limit of 2.5 hours for questions that count toward a student's score: two 30-minute verbal sections, one 15-minute verbal section, two 30-minute mathematics sections, and one 15-minute mathematic section. Research has demonstrated that most students with disabilities taking a standard size print or large print edition of the SAT I complete each section in about 1.5 times the standard amount of time. Therefore, approximately 45 minutes will be necessary for a 30-minute section, 22-23 minutes for a 15-minute section, and a total of 3.75 hours for the entire test. Most students with disabilities taking the braille or cassette test editions and those who use a reader complete each section in about double the standard administration time - approximately 5 hours for the entire test.

Students must complete the sections of the SAT I in the order in which they are presented in the test book. If the entire test cannot be completed in one day, students may finish the test on the next day, but for security reasons each section of the SAT I must be completed on the day it is started.

A standard administration of a SAT II (subject test) has a time limit of one hour. Most students with disabilities complete each Subject Test in 1.5 - 2 hours. Students who register for two or three Subject Tests may take the second or third test on consecutive days, but for security reasons, each test must be completed on the day it is started.

Other Test Modifications

Students may request modifications which are appropriate, based on their disability. Students may use a magnifying device, typewriter, braille device, a reader to dictate questions, or a recorder to mark answers on an answer sheet. Students who have disabilities due to deafness or hearing impairment may have a sign language or oral interpreter to translate test directions from spoken English. The reader, recorder or interpreter should not be a relative of the student or prospective taker of the SAT Program test.

TEST MODIFICATIONS AUTHORIZED UNDER PLAN B

Plan B is available to students with disabilities who can test at national test centers, using a regular print test and a machine-scanable answer sheet. Students are permitted 90 minutes of additional testing time for the SAT I. No other test modifications may be provided. A student with a disability who needs other accommodations should test under Plan A. Plan B is not available for SAT II.

PRACTICE MATERIALS

Students should contact their high school guidance office to receive practice materials for the SAT I or SAT II. Two booklets: *Taking the SAT I: Reasoning Test* and *Taking the SAT II: Subject Tests* describe the tests and their use, suggest strategies for answering various types of questions, and provide practice questions and scoring procedures. These practice materials are available for the standard size print edition. Additional practice materials are available in large print, braille, cassette, or script for the SAT I, and in large print and braille for SAT II questions.

Commercially developed practice materials are also available in many book stores and public libraries.

MORE INFORMATION

Information and registration materials for taking the PSAT/NMSQT, SAT I or SAT II with modifications are available from:

Educational Testing Service
SAT Services for Students with Disabilities
P.O. Box 6226
Princeton, NJ 08541-6226
(609) 771-7137
(609) 882-4118 TTY

MODULE 6

ACT ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

INTRODUCTION

Most colleges and universities rely upon multiple criteria in selecting students for admission. Admissions officers look for evidence of achievement, motivation and intellectual curiosity. The most important criterion is usually an evaluation of academic performance, including an appraisal of the standards and rigor of the student's secondary school program. Many colleges and universities also place heavy emphasis on recommendations from teachers, essays prepared by the applicants and applicant interviews. Other important considerations may include special talents (musical, artistic, literary and athletic); active commitment to social, political or environmental issues; participation in student government; extra curricular activities; volunteer work; and employment.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact any college and university in which they are interested, prior to submitting admissions applications, in order to determine the availability of accommodations in admissions procedures requirements and the program and boarding accommodations which would be available upon enrollment. Students and their parents may also review the Directory of Higher Education Services for Students with Disabilities, which may be accessed at regional offices of the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (listed in Appendix H) or through public libraries.

Many colleges and universities also use standardized assessment information as part of the selection process. The ACT Assessment, as well as the SAT I: Reasoning Test and the SAT II: Subject Test which are discussed in Module 5, are frequently required as part of the application process since they provide consistent information, student-to-student, on national and worldwide bases.

The ACT Assessment is usually administered in grade 11 or 12. The ACT is a tool for evaluating college readiness - it is not an intelligence test. The ACT assessment program measures academic achievement, using a multiple-choice assessment format, in four curriculum areas:

- English - Usage and mechanics (punctuation, grammar, sentence structure)
  - Rhetorical Skills (strategy, organization, style)
- Mathematics - Pre-Algebra/Elementary Algebra
  - Intermediate Algebra/Coordinate Geometry
  - Plane Geometry/Trigonometry

- Reading - Social Studies/Natural Sciences
  - Arts and Literature
- Science - Biology
  - Chemistry
  - Physics
  - Earth/Space Sciences

The content covered in the ACT assessment usually corresponds closely with topics covered in typical high school programs.

ELIGIBILITY FOR TEST MODIFICATIONS

In order for a student with a disability to be eligible to take the ACT Program tests with test modifications, the student must have a disability which necessitates test modifications and one or more of the following documents must be submitted:

- A copy of the student's Individualized Education Program (IEP) or Section 504 Accommodation Plan (504 Plan) which was developed within the last three years. (For students with learning disabilities, the specific type of disability must be indicated (e.g., developmental mathematics or developmental reading disorder).
- A letter from an appropriate member of the school staff who has direct knowledge of the student, verifying that the student consistently uses the requested test modification during the school program.
- In cases where there is no history of the requested test modification being used in an academic setting, a statement from an appropriate member of the school staff or a qualified professional who has recently reviewed the student's diagnosis. This statement should explain:

-under what circumstances the test modification would be permitted in school, if known, and
-why the test modification is necessary for the ACT Assessment.

Testing scores will be reported as **"SPECIAL"** under Type of Testing on reports sent to the high school and colleges if time extensions or special materials were authorized. This will indicate that special accommodations were provided at the student's request. ACT does not state the reasons nor the accommodations provided.

AUTHORIZED TEST MODIFICATIONS

Based on the individual student's disability, the following test modifications may be approved by ACT program staff:

- **Students with visual impairments or blindness** may be eligible for assistance in marking their responses and may receive extended time. The ACT Assessment is available in large print and braille editions and on audio cassettes (recorded by a professional reader) with raised line drawings. The ACT may not be read to students using braille or cassette editions of the test, but such students will also be provided a printed copy of the test. Instead of cassettes, a student may request a reader's script. (ACT recommends that cassettes be used

rather than reader's scripts.) Students may also be permitted to braille their responses, if someone at the test center is proficient in braille and will transfer the student's responses to the answer folder.

- **Students with hearing impairments** whose hearing loss has resulted in a reading disability may be eligible for extended time. A sign language interpreter may assist with pretest information and all spoken instructions, but no assistance may be given during the administration of the four tests.

- **Students with learning disabilities** may be eligible for extended time and/or an alternate test form. The alternate test form requested must be consistent with test modifications provided during the student's current school program. A printed copy of the test will also be provided to a student who is approved for the audio cassette edition, but the test may not be read to the student.

- **Students with motor disabilities** that adversely affect their ability to mark their answers may be eligible for extended time and for assistance in entering responses.

- **Students with psychological disabilities or cognitive disabilities** may be eligible for extended time. Test anxiety alone is not an appropriate basis for the approval of test modifications.

In cases where time extension is authorized, ACT will inform the test supervisor regarding the amount of extra time which may be permitted. Such determinations will be based on the student's type(s) of disability and the test format to be used. More than 90 percent of students with the same diagnosis and using the same format finish before the maximum time authorized based on ACT guidelines.

A calculator is not permitted during a standard administration of the ACT. When calculator use is approved as a test modification, a basic calculator with the four major functions is adequate. In addition, calculators with short-term memory, percent, square root and scientific functions are also permitted. For students who have a disability due to blindness, an audible calculator may be approved.

OTHER TEST MODIFICATIONS

Students may request modifications which are appropriate, based on their disability. Other modifications which may be approved by ACT program staff include:

- abacus
- brailler/stylus
- cassette player with head set
- magnifying glass
- color overlay

PRACTICE MATERIALS

Students should contact their high school guidance office to receive practice materials for the ACT tests. The booklet *Preparing for the ACT Assessment* provides information about the tests and test-taking strategies, and also includes a complete practice test. A free copy of the standard size print booklet may also be obtained by writing to:

ACT Registration
P.O. Box 414
Iowa City, Iowa 52243

A limited supply of practice tests are also available for student use in braille, large print, or on cassettes by writing to:

ACT Special Testing
P.O. Box 4028
Iowa City, Iowa 52243-4028
(specify the format desired)

Commercially developed practice materials are also available in many book stores and public libraries. (The only book that uses actual ACT materials is the Official Guide to the ACT Assessment, published by Harcourt Brace Jovanovich.)

MORE INFORMATION

Information and registration materials for taking the American College Tests with modifications is available from:

ACT Universal Testing
2255 North Dubuque Road
P.O. Box 4028
Iowa City, Iowa 52243-4028
Special Testing: (319) 337-1332
Arranged Testing: (319) 337-1448
TDD: (319) 337-1524

MODULE 7

GRADUATE RECORD EXAMINATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Most colleges and universities rely upon multiple criteria in selecting students for graduate programs (usually leading to a masters degree, certificate of advanced study or doctoral degree) or post-graduate programs (focusing on particular areas of interest or specialization). The most important criterion is usually an evaluation of academic performance, including an appraisal of the standards and rigor of the student's undergraduate program. Many colleges and universities also place heavy emphasis on recommendations from the student's undergraduate professors or instructors and applicant interviews.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact any college and university in which they are interested, prior to submitting admissions applications, in order to determine the availability of accommodations in admissions procedures requirements and the program and boarding accommodations which would be available upon enrollment. Students and their parents may also review the Directory of Higher Education Services for Students with Disabilities, which may be accessed at regional offices of the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (listed in Appendix H) or through public libraries.

Many colleges and universities also use standardized assessment information as part of the selection process. Graduate Record Examinations (GREs) are frequently required as part of the graduate school application process since they provide consistent information, student-to-student, on national and worldwide bases.

The GRE General Test is one means of evaluating likely success in graduate school. Its questions are designed to measure skills and knowledge gained over a long period of time in regard to verbal, quantitative and analytical abilities. It is not designed to measure characteristics such as intelligence, motivation, or perseverance. The test does, however, make it possible to compare students with different backgrounds.

The *verbal sections* of the General Test include diverse questions ranging from the activities of daily life to broad categories of academic interest such as the sciences, social studies, and the humanities. The *quantitative sections* of the test include arithmetic, algebra, geometry and data analysis; these content areas are usually studied in high school. The *analytical sections* measure reasoning skills developed in virtually all fields of study; no formal training in logic or methods of analysis are needed to do well in these sections.

There are two standard administration formats for the GRE: the standard pencil and paper administration and a computer-based testing administration. The Computer-Based Testing (CBT) Program is a new version of the General Test known as the Computer-Adaptive Test (CAT). The CAT has been designed to provide precise information about an examinee's abilities using fewer questions than the traditional General Test. It also offers other advantages, including:

- convenience and flexibility of scheduling a testing appointment
- year-round testing in many locations
- immediate knowledge of scores
- faster score reporting service

Some graduate/professional schools may also require a specified GRE Subject Test. The GRE Subject Tests use a multiple-choice assessment format to measure the achievement and mastery of knowledge and skills presented in an undergraduate major field of study. Subject tests are offered in the following fields:

Biology	English Literature
Chemistry	Mathematics
Computer Science	Music
Economics	Physics
Education	Political Science
Engineering	Psychology
Geology	Sociology
History	

BEFORE REQUESTING TEST MODIFICATIONS

Not all students with disabilities need test modifications in order to demonstrate knowledge and abilities. Before making arrangements to take the Graduate Record Examinations, students with disabilities should determine whether they can take the tests without the use of test modifications, within the standard time limits, and using the standard test booklet and answer sheet. The scores for students taking such tests with modifications may not reflect educational ability in the same manner as scores for students completing the tests under standardized conditions. Therefore, a statement is included with reports of scores that are earned under non-standard conditions pointing out the special nature of the score results and the importance of considering other indicators of academic achievement in the admissions process. Final responsibility for interpreting test results will rest with the score recipients (e.g., college and university admissions officers).

ELIGIBILITY FOR TEST MODIFICATIONS

In order for a student with a disability to be eligible to take Graduate Record Examinations with test modifications, a student must:

- have a disability that necessitates test modifications, and

- submit a letter to the Educational Testing Service in addition to the registration form describing the nature of his/her disability, specifying the accommodations needed and additional time required, and submit a completed certification document (included with GRE registration materials). If the student has been receiving or has received accommodations at his/her undergraduate institution, the certification document can be completed by the Office of Student Disability Services stating that documentation of the student's disability is on file in the office and that similar accommodations have either been provided to the student at the institution or have been previously approved for the student. In the absence of a completed certification document, documentation, on official letterhead, by a licensed or certified professional qualified to evaluate the student's disability must be submitted. A description of the student's disability and an explanation of the necessity for the specific accommodation(s) requested should be provided in the documentation. The documentation must also specify the special accommodation(s) needed and additional testing time required. Such documentation should be no more than five years old. GRE program staff will evaluate the reasonableness of the request for accommodation(s) and, in some instances, may contact the licensed or certified professional submitting documentation in order to receive further information, clarification or documentation. GRE program staff also maintain the right to request, if necessary, further verification of the professional's credentials and expertise relevant to the recommendation being made and to retain an independent expert to evaluate the examiner's documentation about the student's disability, as well as the request and explanation for the accommodation(s). Documentation, on official college or university letterhead, stating that similar accommodations have been made for the student in other educational testing situations must also be submitted. If no prior accommodations have been made for the student, a detailed explanation must be provided by a licensed or certified professional, qualified to evaluate the student's disability, explaining why no accommodations were provided in the past and why accommodations will be needed on the GRE. .

AUTHORIZED TEST MODIFICATIONS

The following alternate forms of the GRE are available for the General Test:

- Braille (1972 Nemeth Code)
- Large Print (18 point)
- Cassette with large print or braille figure supplement for use in quantitative sections

Subject Tests are available in large print (14 point). If a format other than large print is necessary, contact the Educational Testing Service, Graduate Record Exams (at the address listed at the end of this module), well in advance of test administration.

Large print answer sheets are available for both the General Test and for Subject Tests. Other available test modifications include:

- Additional testing time
- Separate testing room
- Recorder of answers
- Test reader

- Interpreter
- Other aids customarily used

Examinees who have their own reader or interpreter may request, in advance, that their reader or interpreter be used.

Any person requesting accommodations must follow the registration procedures.

PRACTICE MATERIALS

Students with disabilities are encouraged to register as early as possible for Graduate Record Examinations so that suitable arrangements can be made. Early registration will allow the student more time to use practice test materials that will be provided to them by the Educational Testing Service once their registration is processed. Currently available preparation materials include a *Description of the General Test* in braille, large print or cassette and a full-length version of *Practicing to Take the General Test* in braille, large print or cassette. Students may also order priced publications by telephoning 1-800-537-3160 (if paying by credit card).

Commercially developed practice materials are also available in many book stores and public libraries.

MORE INFORMATION AND APPLICATION MATERIALS

Information and registration materials for taking the General Record Examinations with modifications are available from:

Graduate Record Examinations
Educational Testing Service
P.O. Box 6000
Princeton, NJ 08541-6000

- Phone 609-921-9000
  Test Administration Services,
  Services for Disabled Test Takers
- Fax 609-520-1092
  Graduate Record Examinations,
  Educational Testing Service,
  Attn: Services for Disabled Test Takers,
  Mail Stop 20V
- TTY (Telephone/Teletypewriter)
  609-734-9362

MODULE 8

MILLER ANALOGIES TEST

INTRODUCTION

Most colleges and universities rely upon multiple criteria in selecting students for admission to graduate programs (usually leading to a masters degree, certificate of advanced study or doctoral degree) or post-graduate program (focusing on particular areas of interest or specialization). The most important criterion is usually an evaluation of academic performance, including an appraisal of the standards and rigor of the student's undergraduate program. Many colleges and universities also place heavy emphasis on recommendations from professors or instructors and applicant interviews.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact any college and university in which they are interested, prior to submitting admissions applications, in order to determine the availability of accommodations in admissions procedures requirements and program and boarding accommodations which would be made available upon enrollment. Students and their parents may also review the Directory of Higher Education Services for Students with Disabilities, which may be accessed at regional offices of the Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities (listed in Appendix H) or through public libraries.

Many colleges and universities also use standardized assessment information as part of the selection process. The Miller Analogies Test (MAT) is frequently required as part of the application process since it provides consistent information, student-to-student, on national and worldwide bases.

The Miller Analogies Test consists of 100 analogies, mostly verbal, which are to be answered in 50 minutes. An analogy is a verbal proportion presented in the form: A:B::C:D (the symbol : stands for "is to;" the symbol :: stands for "as"). On the MAT, one of the four terms in the analogy is missing and four options are provided in parentheses. The following sample analogy is provided for illustration purposes:

gasoline:automobile::food:(a. grocery store, b. people, c. dinner, d. refrigerator)

BEFORE REQUESTING TEST MODIFICATIONS

Not all students with disabilities need test modifications in order to demonstrate knowledge and abilities. Before making arrangements to take the Miller Analogies Test, students with disabilities should determine whether they can take the test without the use of test modifications, within the standard time limits, and using the standard test booklet and

answer sheet. For students with disabilities who take the MAT with test modifications, score reports will not be annotated to reflect the use of modifications. In applying to colleges and universities, however, students with disabilities are encouraged to self-indicate that they have disabilities in order to receive accommodations which colleges may make available in regard to admissions procedures, academic program requirements and boarding (lodging, parking, etc.).

ELIGIBILITY FOR TEST MODIFICATIONS

In order to accommodate an individual with a disability, the Controlled Testing Center (CTC) of The Psychological Corporation (TPC) must be informed of the disability in advance of the testing appointment. Therefore, students with disabilities are strongly urged to arrange for special administrations several weeks prior to reporting for an examination.

In order for a student with a disability to be eligible to take the Miller Analogies Test with test modifications, the student must:

- have a disability which necessitates test modifications
- submit a current letter from a licensed physician, optometrist, social worker or psychologist (including title, address, and telephone number), on official letterhead, describing the nature of the functional limitation as it relates to taking a multiple-choice, standardized test and the specific accommodations needed for testing.

Determinations regarding the test modifications which may be approved for individuals having various types of disabilities are based on the chart below (reprinted with permission from The Psychological Corporation). The table, however, is only a guide and does not reflect all possible modifications which may be authorized.

EXAMPLES OF ACCOMMODATIONS FOR EXAMINEES WITH DISABILITIES

Disability	Special Personnel	Seating	Timing	Aids Permitted	Comments
Visual Impairment	Reader, Scribe	Separate room Good lighting	Extended	Magnifier Ruler Place Marker	Large print and braille ONLY are untimed. Other visual problems: double-time
Hearing Impairment					
a. Mild	None	Seat near examiner	Extra time for directions only	None	May need help with directions
b. Severe	Interpreter for directions only	Separate room	Extra time for directions only	None	
Physical Impairment					
a. Mobility (Locomotion)	None	Seat near exit	Standard	Lapboard Table	Make plans for emergency exit
b. Writing Impairment (e.g., fractured arm)	Scribe	Separate room	Standard	None	
Learning Disability (e.g., Dyslexia)	Reader and/or Scribe	Separate room	Double-time	Ruler Place Marker	
Other Impairments	Accommodations must be approved in advance by the Cognizant Project Director at The Psychological Corporation				

These guidelines have been approved for use in administering the Miller Analogies Test only.

For students with visual impairments, a braille edition of the Miller Analogies Test is available. The student reads each item, announces his/her choice, and the examiner records it on the answer document. A large print edition of the MAT is also available.

Administration of the MAT by a reader is also permitted. Either the CTC Administrator or a registered deputy may serve as a reader. It is also expected that an audio cassette version of the MAT will be published by December 1995.

TEST MODIFICATION RESTRICTIONS

Because there is no quantitative section on the MAT, there is no basis for requesting or approving the use of a calculator as a test modification.

PRACTICE MATERIALS

Practice materials are currently not available from The Psychological Corporation which produces and distributes the Miller Analogies Test. Commercially developed practice materials, however, are available in many book stores and public libraries.

MORE INFORMATION

Information and registration materials for taking the Miller Analogies Test with modifications is available from:

Controlled Testing Center Coordinator
The Psychological Corporation
555 Academic Court
San Antonio, TX 78204
1 (800) 622-3231 or (210) 921-8803
Facsimile (210) 921-8861
TDD: 1-800-723-1318

MODULE 9

PROFESSIONAL LICENSING EXAMINATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to Title VIII of New York Education Law, the Board of Regents supervises and the State Education Department administers admission to and practice of the "licensed professions." A listing of the 38 professions follows:

ACUPUNCTURE
ARCHITECTURE
ATHLETIC TRAINER
AUDIOLOGY
CERTIFIED PUBLIC ACCOUNTANCY
CERTIFIED SHORTHAND REPORTING
CHIROPRACTIC
DENTAL HYGIENE
DENTISTRY
DIETETICS AND NUTRITION
INTERIOR DESIGN
LAND SURVEYING
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE
LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSING
MASSAGE THERAPY
MEDICINE
MIDWIFERY
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY
OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY ASSISTANT
OPHTHALMIC DISPENSING
OPTOMETRY
PHARMACY
PHYSICAL THERAPY
PHYSICAL THERAPIST ASSISTANT
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT
PODIATRY
PSYCHOLOGY
PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERING
PUBLIC ACCOUNTANCY
REGISTERED PHYSICIAN ASSISTANT
REGISTERED PROFESSIONAL NURSING
REGISTERED SPECIALIST ASSISTANT
RESPIRATORY THERAPIST
RESPIRATORY THERAPIST TECHNICIAN
SOCIAL WORK

SPEECH-LANGUAGE PATHOLOGY
VETERINARY MEDICINE
VETERINARY TECHNOLOGY

The guidelines described in this module ensure that candidates with documented need for reasonable accommodations in taking Department-conducted professional licensing examinations are treated equitably and appropriately. It should also be noted that the license earned by a candidate with a disability who has received test modifications during the administration of a required licensure examination may not include any annotation regarding the provision of such test modifications.

NEED FOR REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Consistent with the federal and State requirements presented in Module 1, reasonable accommodations are made for candidates whose disabilities, including temporary disabilities, will otherwise place them at an unfair disadvantage in an examination for professional licensure. Test modifications are considered only to the extent they are necessary to give the candidate with disabilities a fair and equal opportunity to demonstrate mastery of skills and attainment of knowledge in the examination. Reasonable accommodations vary according to the type and degree of disability. Decisions are made on an individual basis and are dependent upon the disability, documentation provided, and the nature of the examination.

CRITERIA FOR REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Individuals meeting one or more of the disability definitions contained in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, or Part 200 of the Regulations of the Commissioner of Eduction may be considered eligible for test modifications in professional licensing examinations in New York State. Also, individuals classified as having a disability in another state by a Committee on Special Education, Child Study Team, or other similar body may be considered as having a disability in New York State.

Candidates having temporary disabilities, such as a broken arm, that will hinder their test performance may also be eligible for reasonable accommodations for licensing examinations.

DOCUMENTATION

Candidates requesting test modifications because of long-term disabilities or temporary disabilities must provide acceptable documentation of the condition/disability and documentation that specifies the extent to which testing procedures need to be modified. (Candidates are responsible for arranging, and bearing the cost, for appropriate evaluations.) The three acceptable types of documentation follow:

1. Documentation from the candidate's department chairperson of the professional program attended or the school's coordinator for individuals with disabilities.

Documentation must explain the nature and extent of a candidate's condition/disability, the types of accommodations made for the candidate while in study at the school, and the justification for those reasonable accommodations.

2. Documentation from the candidate's New York State Committee on Special Education, Section 504 Multidisciplinary Team or similar out-of-State sanctioned committees on special education indicating the extent of the candidate's condition/disability, the types of accommodations made for the candidate while in study at the school, and the justification for those reasonable accommodations.

3. A detailed letter from an appropriate physician or other duly licensed professional health-care provider who has diagnosed and/or treated the candidate indicating the nature and extent of a candidate's disability, the proposed accommodations, the rationale supporting the need for reasonable accommodations, and, if applicable, the types of accommodations made for the candidate in the past.

Documentation furnished by candidates with disabilities is considered confidential and will be kept on file for future reference. Additional documentation will be required if candidates request changes in accommodations.

TIMELINES FOR SUBMITTING DOCUMENTATION

Documentation supporting a request for reasonable test modifications should be submitted at the time the application for an examination is made. Documentation for Local Government Research (LGR) administered written examinations should be submitted to LGR Examinations at the address provided on the LGR Scheduling Form 99.

Documentation for **practical** examinations should be submitted to:

New York State Education Department
Bureau of Professional Examination Development and Assessment
Cultural Education Center, Room 3011
Albany, NY 12230

TYPES OF TEST MODIFICATIONS WHICH MAY BE AUTHORIZED

Visual Impairment

1. Blind - This includes candidates without vision or those with unreliable vision who may need to rely on tactile and/or aural means to obtain information (instructions and questions) during the examination. Additionally, modifications in the usual mode of examination response (i.e., paper and pencil recording) may need to be made to allow candidates to either record their own responses or have responses recorded for them (e.g., by a reader/writer proctor).

The following test modifications may be approved for candidates who are disabled due to blindness:

- brailled booklets
- tape recorded booklets
- a reader
- a reader/writer proctor
- recording device for recording answers
- manual brailler for note taking
- calculating devices, such as abacus or "talking" calculator
- use of a "talking" computer
- use of a personal tape recorder for note taking
- extra time
- an individual proctor
- test location accessible by mass transit

2. **Partially sighted or low vision** - Candidates with low or limited vision may be able to perform gross visual tasks but may have difficulty with detailed visual tasks, such as printed material, graphs, charts, diagrams, etc. A candidate's speed, endurance, and precision may also be detrimentally affected by visual disabilities. Depending upon the degree and type of disability, a candidate may need a reader or other aural means to obtain information (instructions and questions) during the examination. In some cases, modifications in the standard mode of examination response (i.e., paper and pencil recording) need to be made in order to allow individuals to record their own answers or to have their responses recorded for them by a reader/writer proctor.

The following test modifications may be approved for candidates with partial sight or low vision:

- brailled booklets
- tape recorded booklets
- mechanical enlarging or magnifying equipment
- a reader proctor
- a reader/writer proctor
- recording device for recording answers
- manual brailler for note taking
- use of calculating devices, such as abacus or "talking" calculator
- use of a "talking" computer
- use of a personal tape recorder for note taking
- "magic marker" or black crayon for note taking
- provisions for special lighting
- extra time
- an individual proctor
- test location assessable by mass transit

Hearing Impairment

1. **Prelingual Deafness** (deafness occurring prior to the development of language) - Candidates with prelingual deafness are likely to have limited English language concepts which may cause them difficulty in comprehending some materials in standard English. They may need to receive instructions either in print or through sign language, which may be furnished through an interpreter for the deaf who actually translates standard English into the language familiar to the candidate.

The following test modifications may be approved for candidates with prelingual deafness:

- written instructions for all parts of the testing sessions
- extra time
- an individual proctor
- an interpreter

2. **Postlingual deafness/hearing impairment** - These candidates are usually able to process written information in a manner similar to nondisabled candidates, but may require test modifications for oral test instructions. Candidates should be seated where they have a clear view of the examination administrator giving instructions.

The following test modifications may be approved for candidates with postlingual deafness/hearing impairment:

- written instructions for all parts of the testing sessions
- an interpreter
- special seating

Learning Disabilities

Candidates with learning disabilities may have deficits in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using written or spoken language. Such disabilities may cause difficulties in listening, thinking, speaking, reading, writing, spelling or performing mathematical calculations. Inability to read because of mental retardation does not fall into this category.

The following test modifications may be approved for candidates with learning disabilities:

- a reader proctor
- tape recorded booklets
- extra time
- an individual proctor
- a reader/writer proctor
- typewriter or word processor

- recording device for recording answers
- use of personal tape recorder for note taking

Manipulative/Writing Disabilities

Candidates with manipulative/writing disabilities may be permitted test modifications only in the recording of their responses, not in reading the test questions.

The following accommodations may be approved for candidates with manipulative/writing disabilities:

- writer proctor
- recording device for recording answers
- typewriter or word processor
- extra time
- an individual proctor
- a "magic marker" or black crayon for note taking

Health Impairment

Candidates with health impairments may exhibit medical symptoms and/or limited physical stamina. They may require frequent rest periods or breaks during the examination to change position, use the lavatory or rest.

The following test modifications may be approved for candidates with health impairments:

- special timing (e.g., 10 minute rest periods during each hour plus 30 minute rest periods after 3 1/2 hours); rest periods not to count toward total test time allowance
- breaks for use of toilet facilities; time not to be counted toward total test time allowance
- an individual proctor
- special seating
- test location near home

Orthopedic Impairment

Candidates with orthopedic impairments may have limited ambulation and/or mobility. The following test modifications may be approved for candidates with orthopedic impairments:

- test facilities accessible to persons with mobility disabilities (ambulatory or in wheelchairs)
- parking arrangements
- toilet facilities accessible to persons in wheelchairs

- table or desk at appropriate height and with sufficient clearance to permit comfortable work for persons in a wheelchair
- sturdy armchair and table for ambulatory persons with crutches, canes, etc.
- test center accessible by mass transit
- testing rooms as close as possible to entrance and elevators

Mental Health Impairment

Candidates with emotional or mental health impairments which substantially limit major life activities may be provided reasonable accommodations for the examination. Such emotional/mental impairments may be exhibited in interpersonal relationships, by inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances, alterations in mood, and/or tendencies to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal problems. The following test modifications may be approved for these candidates.

- extra time
- separate or special seating

PRACTICE MATERIALS

Practice materials are currently not available from the State Education Department for professional licensure examinations. Commercially developed practice materials, however, are available in many book stores and public libraries.

MORE INFORMATION AND MATERIALS

Individuals wishing to receive additional information should contact the Office of the Professions at:

New York State Education Department
Bureau of Professional Examination Development and Assessment
Cultural Education Center, Room 3011
Albany, NY 12230
(518) 486-2099

MODULE 10

NEW YORK STATE CIVIL SERVICE EXAMINATIONS

INTRODUCTION

New York State has established civil service procedures for the recruitment and employment of personnel who are highly competent and dedicated to public service. The State's civil service system does not discriminate on the basis of age, color, religion, creed, disability, marital status, veteran status, national origin, race, gender or sexual orientation. Personnel procedures have been developed in a manner fully consistent with the various laws described in Module 1, ensuring that all qualified individuals with disabilities are provided equitable opportunities to take civil service examinations and to demonstrate their knowledge and abilities during the administration of such examinations.

There are many types of civil service examinations, including:

- Multiple Choice Examinations designed to measure applicants' knowledge and aptitude based on the answers/solutions they select from a listing of possible responses.

- Written/Essay Examinations in which applicants are presented one or more situations or problems and are required to compose logical and appropriate plans or solutions.

- Oral Examinations in which applicants are presented situations or problems verbally and/or in writing, and are required to articulate logical and appropriate responses.

- Training and Experience Examinations in which applicants complete structured questionnaires within a specified period of time (usually two weeks or more), in which they summarize educational, training and other experiences which qualify them for a specific type of employment.

One or more competitive class examinations are required in order to be hired as a New York State civil service employee with permanent status (accruing seniority). Successful performance on examinations is required for initial employment in the State workforce or for promotional opportunities. Individuals who achieve the highest scores on required civil service examinations are then interviewed by appropriate administrators. Based on this examination/interview process, the most competent applicant will be offered a State civil service appointment.

NEED FOR REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Reasonable accommodations are made for applicants whose long-term disabilities or temporary disabilities will otherwise place them at an unfair disadvantage during the administration of civil service examinations. Test modifications are considered only to the extent they are necessary to give the applicant with a disability a fair and equal opportunity

to demonstrate mastery of knowledge and skills, and to the extent examination items/criteria which are directly related to successful job performance are not invalidated by modifications. Reasonable accommodations vary according to the type and degree of disability. Decisions regarding test modifications are made on an individual basis and are dependent upon the disability, documentation provided, and the nature of the examination.

CRITERIA FOR REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS

Individuals meeting one or more of the disability definitions contained in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, and the Americans with Disabilities Act may be considered eligible for test modifications for New York State civil service examinations. Also, individuals classified as having a disability in another state (by a Committee on Special Education or other similar body) may also be considered as having a disability in New York State. Applicants having temporary disabilities, such as a broken arm, that will hinder their performance on examinations may also be eligible for reasonable accommodations during civil service examinations.

DOCUMENTATION

Individuals who have disabilities which will necessitate use of test modifications during State civil service examinations must indicate that they have such a disability and require accommodations on the Application Form for the State examination.* The SAU will contact the applicant requesting the test modification(s) in order to discuss the individual's disability, the effects of the disability in demonstrating knowledge and abilities on the specific civil service examination(s) and the documentation and materials which must be submitted in order for test modifications to be authorized. In general, the following types of documentation and materials are required:

- Documentation, on letterhead, from an Institution of Higher Education (IHE) (college, university, vocational training school, etc.) which the applicant attended. Documentation must explain the nature and extent of the applicant's condition/disability, the types of accommodations made for the applicant while in study at the school, and the justification for the reasonable accommodations.

- Documentation from the applicant's New York State Committee on Special Education (formally known as the Committee on the Handicapped), Section 504 Multidisciplinary Team or similar out-of-State sanctioned committees on special education, indicating the extent of the applicant's condition/disability, the types of accommodations made for the applicant while in study at the school, and the justification for the reasonable accommodations.

*Notice of the need for an accommodation will be electronically forwarded to the Civil Service Special Accommodations Unit (SAU). On the application form, candidates are advised to contact the SAU to discuss accommodations.

- A detailed letter from an appropriate physician or other duly licensed professional health-care provider, on letterhead, who has diagnosed and/or treated the applicant, indicating the nature and extent of the applicant's disability, the proposed accommodations, the rationale supporting the need for reasonable accommodations, and, if applicable, the types of accommodations made for the applicant in the past.

Documentation furnished by applicants with disabilities is considered confidential and will be kept on file for future reference. Additional documentation will be required if applicants request changes in accommodations.

TYPES OF TEST MODIFICATIONS WHICH MAY BE AUTHORIZED

Visual Impairment

1. **Blind** This includes applicants without vision or those with unreliable vision who may need to rely on tactile and/or oral means to obtain information (instructions and questions) during the examination. Additionally, modifications of the usual mode of examination response (e.g., paper and pencil recording) may need to be made to allow applicants to either record their responses or have responses recorded for them (e.g., by a reader/writer proctor).

The following test modifications may be approved for applicants who are blind:

- brailled booklets
- tape recorded booklets
- a reader
- a reader/writer proctor
- recording device for recording answers
- manual brailler for note taking
- calculating devices, such as abacus or "talking" calculator
- use of a "talking" computer
- use of a personal tape recorder for note taking
- extra time
- an individual proctor/separate room

2. **Partially sighted or low vision** Applicants with low or limited vision may be able to perform gross visual tasks but may have difficulty with detailed visual tasks, such as printed material, graphs, charts, diagrams, etc. An applicant's speed, endurance and precision may also be detrimentally affected by visual disabilities. Depending upon the degree and type of disability, an applicant may need a reader or other oral means to obtain information (instructions and questions) during the examination. In some cases, modifications in the standard mode of examination response (e.g., paper and pencil recording) will need to be made in order to allow individuals to record their own responses or to have their responses recorded for them by a reader/writer proctor.

The following test modifications may be approved for applicants with partial sight or low vision:

- large print booklet
- brailled booklets
- tape recorded booklets
- mechanical enlarging or magnifying equipment
- a reader proctor
- a reader/writer proctor
- recording device for recording answers
- manual brailler for note taking
- use of calculating devices, such as abacus or "talking" calculator
- use of a "talking" computer
- use of a personal tape recorder for note taking
- "magic marker" or black crayon for note taking
- provisions for special lighting
- extra time
- individual proctor

Hearing Impairment

1. **Prelingual deafness** (deafness occurring prior to the development of language)

Applicants with prelingual deafness are likely to have limited English language concepts which may cause them difficulty in comprehending some materials in standard English. They may need to receive instructions either in print or through sign language, which may be furnished through an interpreter for the deaf who actually translates standard English into the language familiar to the applicant.

The following test modifications may be approved for applicants with prelingual deafness:

- written instructions for all parts of the examination
- extra time
- an individual proctor
- an interpreter

2. **Postlingual deafness/hearing impairment**

These applicants are usually able to process written information in a manner similar to nondisabled applicants, but may require test modifications for oral portions of examinations. Applicants should be seated where they have a clear view of the examination administrator giving instructions.

The following test modifications may be approved for applicants with postlingual deafness/hearing impairment:

- written instructions for all portions of the examination

Learning Disabilities

Applicants with learning disabilities may have challenges in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or using written or spoken language. Such disabilities may affect the individual's listening, thinking, speaking, reading, writing, spelling or ability to perform mathematical calculations.

The following test modifications may be approved for applicants with learning disabilities:

- a reader proctor
- tape recorded booklet
- extra time
- an individual proctor
- a reader/writer proctor
- typewriter or word processor
- recording device for recording answers
- use of personal tape recorder for note taking

Manipulative/Writing Disabilities

Applicants with manipulative/writing disabilities may be permitted test modifications only for recording their responses, not for reading the test questions.

The following test modifications may be approved for applicants with manipulative/writing disabilities:

- writer proctor
- recording device for recording answers
- typewriter or word processor
- extra time
- an individual proctor
- a "magic marker" or black crayon for note taking

Health Impairment

Applicants with health impairments may exhibit medical symptoms and/or limited physical tolerance. They may require frequent rest periods or breaks during the examination to change position, use the lavatory or rest.

The following test modifications may be approved for candidates with health impairments:

- special timing (e.g., a 10 minute rest period during each hour plus 30 minute rest periods after 3 1/2 hours); rest periods not to count toward total test time allowance
- breaks for use of toilet facilities; time not to be counted toward total test time allowance
- an individual proctor
- special seating

Orthopedic Impairment

Applicants with orthopedic impairments may have limited ambulation and/or mobility. The following test modifications may be considered for applicants with orthopedic impairments:

- test facilities accessible to persons with mobility disabilities (ambulatory or in wheelchairs)
- parking arrangements
- toilet facilities accessible to persons in wheelchairs
- table or desk at appropriate height and with sufficient clearance to permit comfortable work for persons in a wheelchair
- sturdy armchair and table for ambulatory persons with crutches, canes, etc.
- testing rooms as close as possible to entrance and elevators

Mental Health Impairment

Applicants with emotional or mental health impairments which substantially limit major life activities may be provided reasonable accommodations for an examination. Such emotional/mental health impairments may be exhibited in interpersonal relationships, by inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances, alterations in mood and/or tendencies to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal problems. The following test modifications may be approved for such applicants:

- extra time
- separate or special seating

PRACTICE MATERIALS

Practice materials are currently not available from the New York State Department of Civil Service for civil service examinations. Commercially developed practice materials, however, are available for specific examinations in many book stores and public libraries.

MORE INFORMATION AND MATERIALS

Individuals wishing to receive additional information should contact:

The Special Accommodations Unit
Department of Civil Service
State Campus
Building 1
Albany, NY 12239
(518) 457-3416

APPENDIX A

SPECIAL EDUCATION TRAINING AND RESOURCE CENTERS

SPECIAL EDUCATION TRAINING AND RESOURCE CENTERS IN NEW YORK STATE TRAINING NETWORK

Office Of Vocational And Educational Services For Individuals With Disabilities
New York State Education Department
Albany, New York 12234
Phone (518) 474-5548

Albany-Schoharie-Schenectady
Saratoga BOCES SETRC
Maywood School - 1979 Central Avenue
Albany, New York 12205
(518) 456-9069
Sheila Bussell
Wilma Jozwiak
Peg Wallis
Marie Brander

Broome-Delaware-Tioga BOCES SETRC
435 Upper Glenwood Road
Binghamton, New York 13905-1699
(607) 763-3362 763-3303
Richard Fedor

Buffalo City SETRC
School #75 - 99 Monroe Street
Buffalo, New York 14206
(716) 851-3919 or 851-3844
Mimi Barnes-Coppola
Maria Cruz-Torres
Judi Harris-DiTallo
Catherine Baugh-Peebles

Buffalo City SETRC
Part 200 Management System
School #26
84 Harrison Street
Buffalo, New York 14210
(716) 828-4710
Charles Carbone

Cattaraugus-Allegany-Erie-Wyoming
BOCES SETRC
1825 Windfall Road
Olean, New York 14760
(716) 372-8293 Ext. 224
Lydia Lavin

Cayuga-Onondaga BOCES SETRC
5890 South Street Road
Auburn, New York 13021
(315) 253-0361
Melinda Fitzpatrick

Clinton-Essex-Warren-Washington
BOCES SETRC - Box 455
Plattsburgh, New York 12901
(518) 561-0900 Ext. 220
Colleen Sullivan

Delaware-Chenango BOCES SETRC
Box 307, RD 3, East River Road
Norwich, NY 13815
(607) 335-1320
Melissa Price
Marki Clair

Dutchess BOCES SETRC
350 Dutchess Turnpike
Poughkeepsie, New York 12603
(914) 486-4840 Ext. 3030
Karen Glek
Val Mihac

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Erie 1 BOCES SETRC
1050 Maryvale Drive
Cheektowaga, New York 14225
(716) 631-2894 Ext. 3030
Theresa Janczak

Erie 2-Chautauqua-Cattaraugus
BOCES SETRC
9520 Fredonia Stockton Road
Fredonia, New York 14063
(716) 672-4371 Ext. 264
1-800-344-9611
Michelle Pembridge
Michele Boutwell
Gayle Murphy

Franklin-Essex-Hamilton BOCES SETRC
North Franklin Educational Center
52 State Street
Malone, New York 12953
(518) 483-8510
Dana Retherford

Genesee Valley BOCES SETRC
Holcomb Building Rm. 262
Geneseo, New York 14454
(716) 243-4489
Gary Hofmann
Annemarie Neubecker

Hamilton-Fulton-Montgomery BOCES SETRC
P. O. Box 998
Broadalbin, New York 12025
(518) 883-6510
Susan Naple
Linda Clawson

Herkimer-Fulton-Hamilton-Otsego
BOCES SETRC
400 Gros Blvd.
Herkimer, New York 13350-1499
(315) 867-2082
Walter Lallier

Jefferson-Lewis-Hamilton-Herkimer-
Oneida BOCES SETRC
Arsenal Street Road
20104 NYS Route 3
Watertown, New York 13601
(315) 785-9137
1-800-544-3645
Carrie Widrick

Madison-Oneida BOCES SETRC
4937 Spring Road, PO Box 168
Verona, New York 13478
(315) 361-5543
Patti Vacca

Monroe 1 BOCES SETRC
41 O'Connor Road
Fairport, NY 14450
(716) 383-2236
Cyndi Besig
Carol Criss

Monroe 2-Orleans BOCES SETRC
3599 Big Ridge Road
Spencerport, New York 14559
(716) 352-2443
Diana Jensen Dooling
Chris Fagan
Joanne Mattiucci

Nassau County BOCES SETRC
Rosemary Kennedy School
2850 North Jerusalem Road
Wantagh, New York 11793
(516) 781-4044 Ext. 270-1-2
Naomi Glaser
Jacci Harris

New York City SETRC
131 Livingston Room 515
Brooklyn, New York 11201
(718) 935-3898
Debra Reecks-Rodgers
Ellen Sonkin
Arlene Stettin

New York City SETRC
Manhattan High School Office
122 Amsterdam Avenue Rm. 389-A
New York, New York 10023
(212) 496-0440
David Connor

NYC Region I SETRC
280 Broadway - Room 324
New York, NY 10007
(212) 233-6900
Virginia Pepe
Gloria Atisogbuie
Toni Ann Bernard
Jana Mandel-Townsend

NYC Region II SETRC
Edward R. Byrne School
2750 Lafayette Avenue
Rm. 304
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APPENDIX B

NEW YORK STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
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APPENDIX D

NEW YORK STATE COMPETENCY TEST PROGRAM

PUPIL EVALUATION PROGRAM (PEP) TESTS
PROGRAM EVALUATION TESTS (PETs)
REGENTS PRELIMINARY COMPETENCY TESTS (PCTs)*

Grade	PEP Test	PET	PCT
3	Reading		
3	Mathematics		
4		Science	
5	Writing		
6	Reading		
6	Mathematics		
6		Social Studies	
8		Social Studies	
8 or 9			Reading
8 or 9			Writing

*The preliminary competency tests must be administered to all public and nonpublic school students in the appropriate grade levels with the following three exceptions:

1. Any students may be exempted from taking the preliminary competency test in reading if they obtained in grade 6 a raw score of 62 or higher on the May 1994 or 1995 edition of the Reading Test for New York State Elementary Schools or a score at or above the national median on a nationally standardized reading test administered in grade 7, 8, or 9. Students may be exempted from taking the preliminary competency test in writing if they obtained in grade 5 a raw score of 10 or higher on the Writing Test for New York State Elementary Schools. It should be noted that the raw scores given for the grade 5 writing test and the grade 6 reading test reflect the statewide medians for the administration of the tests, not the State Reference Points.

2. All students with disabilities must be provided full access to the preliminary competency tests, to the extent that such testing is consistent with their individual needs. Determinations by school principals regarding such access must be based on each student's Individualized Education Program (IEP). Each student with a disability must participate in the preliminary competency testing program unless

his/her IEP specifically indicates that the student should not participate in one or more of the tests.

3. Students whose native language is other than English and who will not have received two full school years (20 months) of English language instruction at the time of testing may be exempted from taking the preliminary competency tests.

APPENDIX E

NEW YORK STATE COMPETENCY TEST PROGRAM

Regents Examinations

English
Comp. English

Mathematics
Sequential math, course I
Sequential math, course II
Sequential math, course III

Social Studies
Global studies
United States history and government

Science
Biology
Chemistry
Earth science
Physics

Foreign Languages
Comp. French
Comp. German
Comp. Hebrew
Comp. Italian
Comp. Latin
Comp. Spanish

Regents Competency Tests

Mathematics
Science
Reading
Writing

Global studies
United States history and government

Occupational Education Proficiency Examinations

Introduction to occupations
Business analysis/business computer applications
Health occupations education core
Human development

Clothing and textiles
Food and nutrition
Housing and environment
Communication systems
Production systems
Transportation systems

Second Language Proficiency Examinations

French
German
Italian

Latin
Spanish

November 1995

APPENDIX F

SAT II AND COLLEGE BOARD ACHIEVEMENT TEST SCORES ACCEPTABLE FOR MEETING REQUIREMENTS FOR A REGENTS DIPLOMA

The SAT II and College Board Achievement Test score(s) indicated below for each Regents subject are the minimum acceptable score(s) that can be substituted for a Regents examination score when a student is unable to take the Regents examination because of extraordinary circumstances, but has successfully completed the Regents course of study for that subject. For example, a student who has successfully completed three years of study based on the English Regents curriculum but is unable to take the Comprehensive English Regents examination may be granted Regents credit for English by attaining scores of at least 470 on both the Writing/English Composition SAT II and the Literature SAT II taken in May 1995 or thereafter.

		Minimum Acceptable Scores Administration Date	
Regents Subject	SAT II/College Board Achievement Test[1]	Prior to May 1995	May 1995 and Thereafter
English[2]	Writing/English Composition	410	470
	and	and	and
	Literature	410	470
United States History and Government	American History and Social Studies	410	460
Global Studies[3]	European History and World Cultures	430	...
	or	430	...
	World History/European History		
		...	470
Mathematics[4]	Mathematics Level I	470	490
	or		
	Mathematics Level II	580	550
Second Languages			
French	French	460	500
German	German	460	470
Hebrew	Hebrew	530	490
Italian	Italian	440	450
Latin	Latin	440	470
Spanish	Spanish	450	460

Sciences			
Biology	Biology	500	540
Chemistry	Chemistry	510	540
Physics	Physics	500	530

[1]In June 1994 the SAT II replaced the College Board Achievement Tests.

[2]The College Board Achievement Test in English Composition has been replaced by the SAT II in Writing/English Composition.

[3]The College Board Achievement Tests both in European History and World Cultures and in World History have been discontinued. These two tests are replaced by the World History/European History SAT II.

[4]A student may be granted Regents credit for a three-unit sequence in mathematics by successfully completing three years of high school mathematics and earning a minimum acceptable score on one of these mathematics tests.

APPENDIX G

ACT, SAT I, SAT II, AND COLLEGE BOARD ACHIEVEMENT TEST SCORES* ACCEPTABLE FOR MEETING COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS FOR A LOCAL HIGH SCHOOL DIPLOMA

Test	Competency in Reading	Competency in Writing	Competency in Mathematics	Competency in Science	Competency in Social Studies
ACT	Reading Test 16	English Test 15	Mathematics Test 16	Science Reasoning 17	See Note Below
SAT I Administered Prior to April, 1995	Verbal 310	Verbal 310	Mathematical 350	The SAT II and College Board Achievement Test scores that are acceptable for meeting the requirements for a Regents-endorsed diploma in science and/or social studies are also acceptable for meeting the competency requirements in those areas.	
SAT I Administered April 1, 1995 and thereafter	Verbal 390	Verbal 390	Mathematical 400		

*In June 1994, the SAT II Tests replaced the College Board Achievement Tests.

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APPENDIX H

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APPENDIX I

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND TERMS

ACE	American Council on Education
ACT	American College Testing Assessment Program
ADA	Americans with Disabilities Act
ADD	Attention Deficit Disorder
AP	Advanced Placement Program
ASL	American Sign Language
BOCES	Board of Cooperative Educational Services
BOE	Board of Education
CAT	California Achievement Tests
CBT	Computer-Based Testing
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CSE	Committee on Special Education
CTC	Controlled Testing Center
ETS	Educational Testing Service
FAPE	Free Appropriate Public Education
504 Plan	Section 504 Accommodation Plan
504 Team	Section 504 Multidisciplinary Team
GED	General Educational Development Test
GRE	Graduate Record Examinations
HSE	High School Equivalency Diploma
IDEA	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
IEP	Individualized Education Program
IHE	Institution of Higher Education
LEA	Local Educational Agency
LGR	Local Government Research
LRE	Least Restrictive Environment
MAT	Miller Analogies Test
NMSQT	National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test
NYCRR	New York Code, Rules and Regulations
OCR	United States Office of Civil Rights
OSES	Office for Special Education Services
PCT	Regents Preliminary Competency Test
PEP	Pupil Evaluation Program Test
PET	Program Evaluation Test
PL	Public Law
PSAT	Preliminary Scholastic Assessment Test
RCT	Regents Competency Test
SAT	Scholastic Assessment Test
SEA	State Educational Agency
SED	State Education Department
SEE	Signing Exact English
SETRC	Special Education Training and Resource Center
SRP	State Reference Point
TBI	Traumatic Brain Injury
The Compact	A New Compact for Learning
TPC	The Psychological Corporation
USDOE	United States Department of Education
VESID	Office of Vocational and Educational Services for Individuals with Disabilities

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